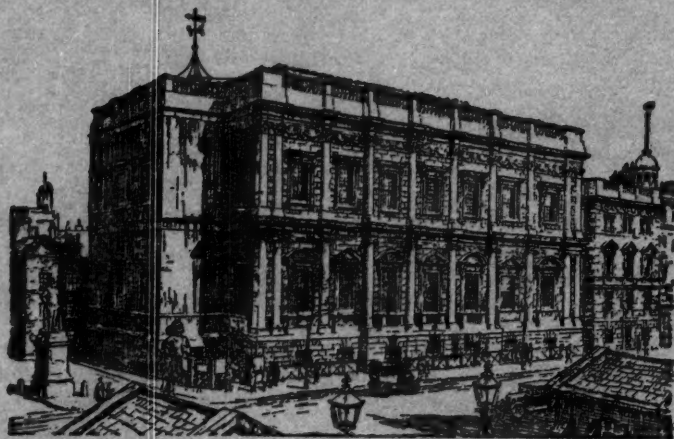


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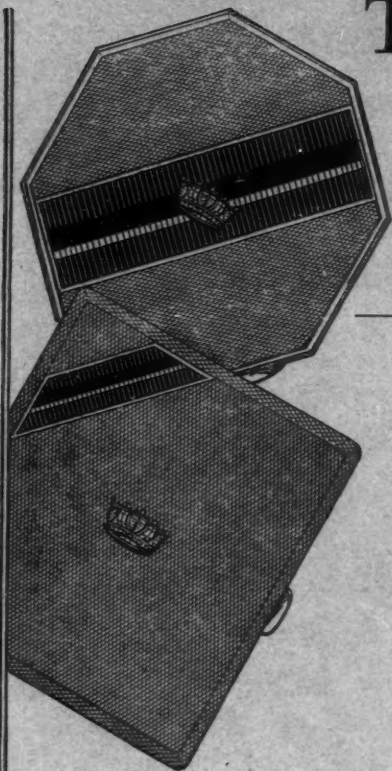
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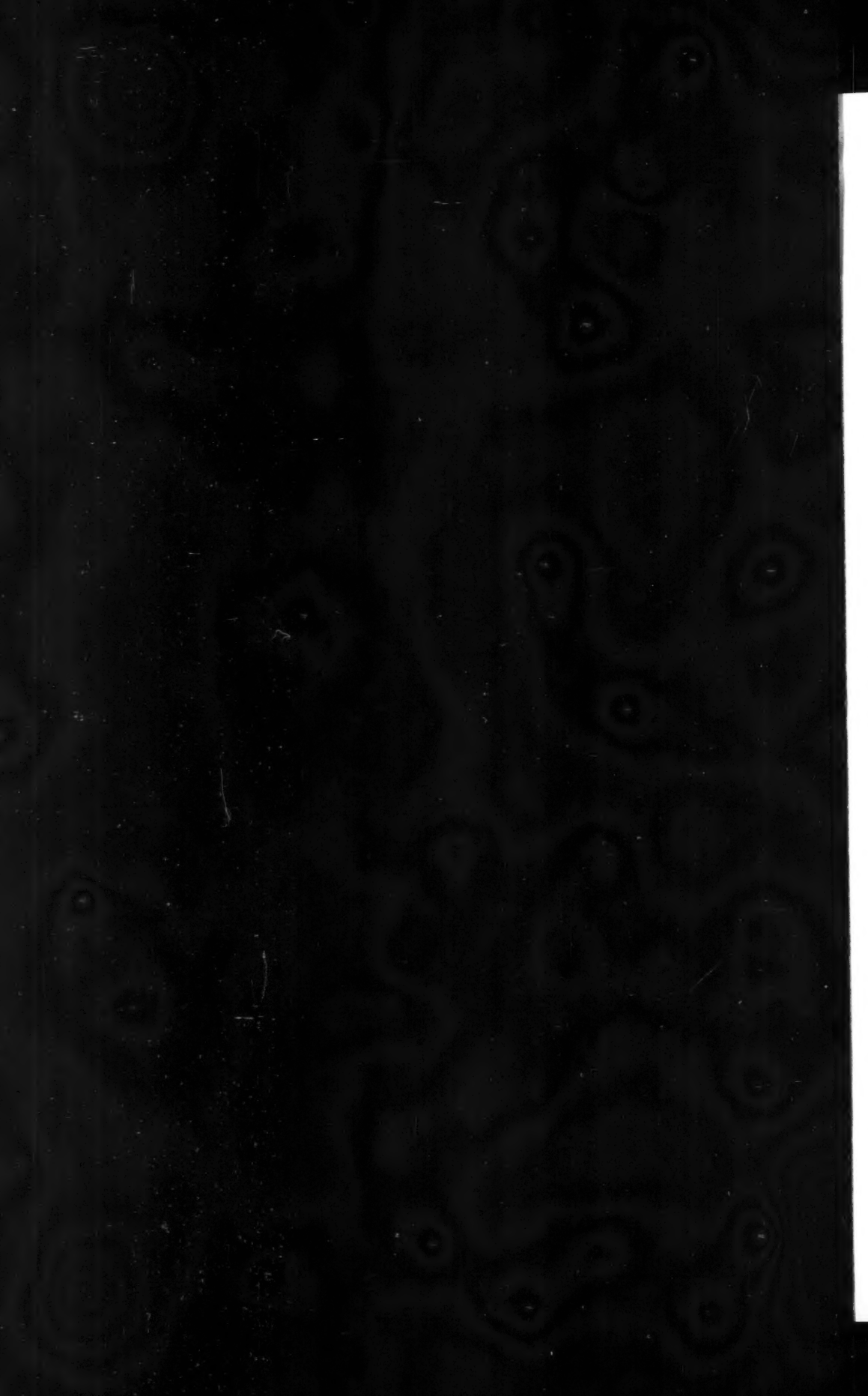
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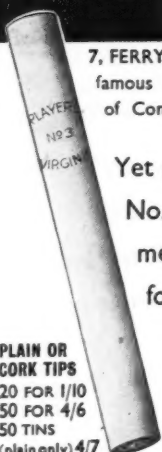


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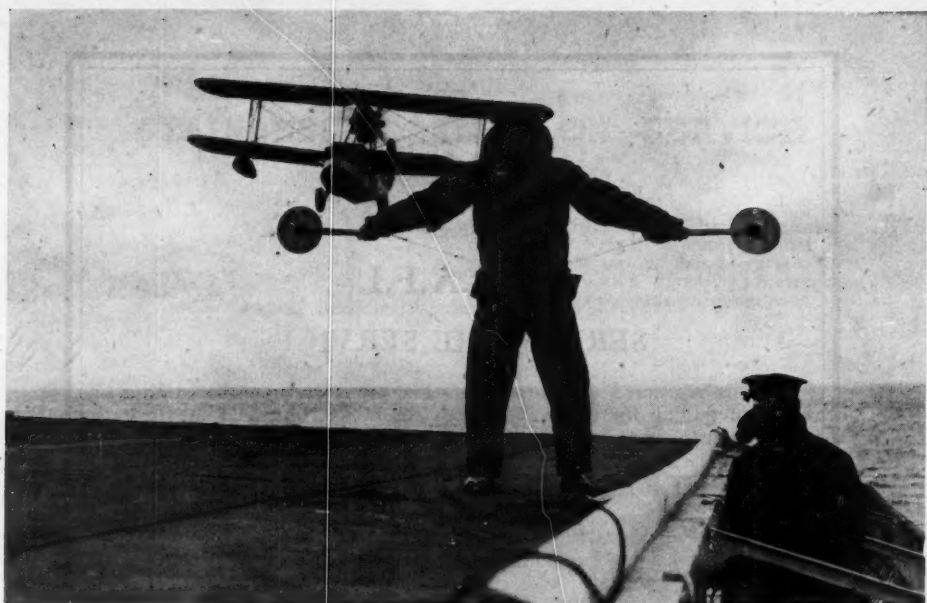
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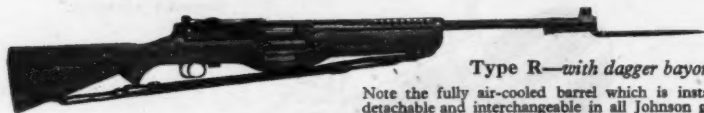
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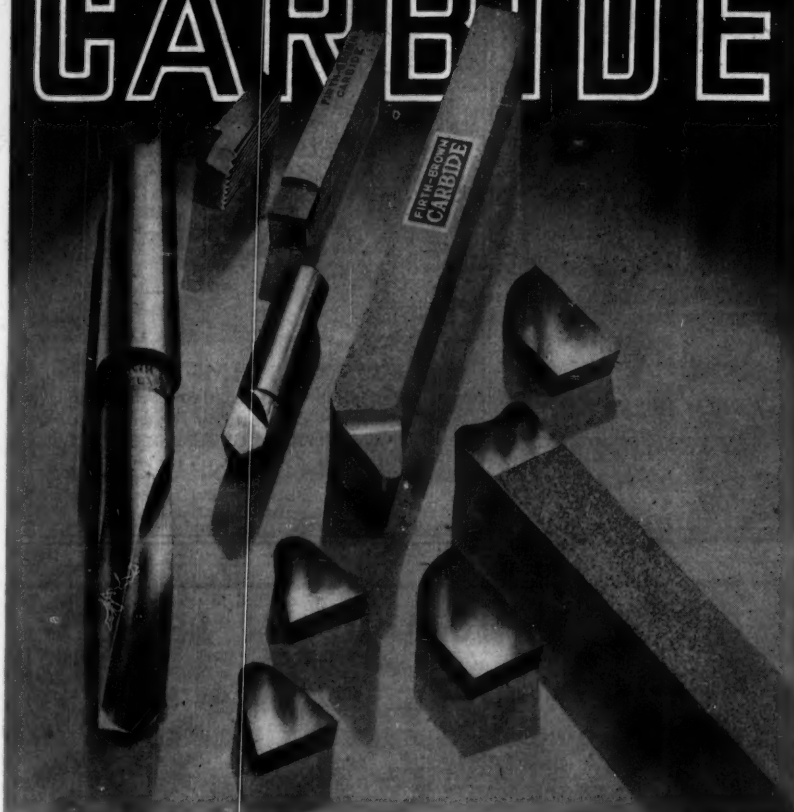
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The Institution is open daily from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., except Sunday, Christmas Day and Good Friday.

### THE JOURNAL

The R.U.S.I. JOURNAL is published in February, May, August and November of each year, and sent post free to Members in any part of the world. Copies may be purchased by non-members, price 7s. 6d.

### THE MUSEUM

The R.U.S. Museum is closed for the duration of the War.

### THE THEATRE

The Lecture Theatre is at present devoted to a Special Exhibition representing "The Fighting Services in the Present War."

## SECRETARY'S NOTES

February, 1941.

### ANNIVERSARY MEETING

The Anniversary Meeting will be held at 3 p.m. on Tuesday the 4th March, 1941. The Council will present their Annual Report and Accounts, and there will be an election to fill the vacancies on the Council.

Copies of the Annual Report and Accounts can be obtained on application to the Secretary.

### COUNCIL

#### Elected Members

Major-General J. R. M. Minshull-Ford, C.B., D.S.O., M.C., has resigned on account of ill-health.

The following Members, having completed three years' service, retire :—

#### ROYAL NAVY

Vice-Admiral Sir Geoffrey Blake, K.C.B., D.S.O.

#### ROYAL NAVAL VOLUNTEER RESERVE

Commodore the Earl Howe, C.B.E., V.D., R.N.V.R.

#### REGULAR ARMY

General Sir Robert Whigham, G.C.B., K.V.M.G., D.S.O.

#### MILITIA

Brigadier-General S. E. Massy-Lloyd, C.B.E.

#### TERRITORIAL ARMY

Colonel F. D. Samuel, C.B.E., D.S.O., T.D.

Colonel B. Abel Smith, D.S.O., M.C., T.D., A.D.C.

#### Representative Members

Major-General A. E. Nye, M.C., has succeeded Major-General E. L. Morris, O.B.E., M.C., as War Office Representative.

#### Staff

Lieutenant-Colonel A. G. Armstrong has resigned his office as Assistant Editor on taking up a military appointment.

#### New Members

The following officers joined the Institution during the period 1st December to 15th February :—

#### ROYAL NAVY

Lieutenant S. R. Le H. Lombard-Hobson, R.N.

2nd Lieutenant J. R. Sturgis, R.M.

2nd Lieutenant D. W. Michell, R.M.

Surgeon Lieutenant-Commander The Hon. A. G. Gathorne-Hardy, R.N.

Captain D. G. Tweed, R.M.

Midshipman L. H. Oliphant, R.N.



## ARMY

Captain A. D. Murray, Royal Artillery.  
Captain S. P. M. Sutton, Royal Tank Regiment, R.A.C.  
Lieut.-Colonel R. E. Davy, Commanding 55th Heavy A.A. Regiment, R.A.  
Lieutenant R. Wort, The Wiltshire Regiment.  
Colonel G. A. Wade, M.C.  
Lieutenant J. N. Smale, The Lancashire Fusiliers.  
Major Donald Mackay, Royal Artillery.  
Major-General E. D. Giles, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O.  
Captain T. A. Shurlock, R.I.A.S.C.  
2nd Lieutenant A. W. Stewart, Royal Signals.  
Major R. W. Peters, Central India Horse.  
Captain H. P. Fielder, Royal Artillery.  
Captain B. A. Stuart, The Royal Welch Fusiliers.  
Lieut.-Colonel C. R. T. Wilmot, The Sherwood Foresters.  
2nd Lieutenant P. D. Stenning, Royal Engineers.  
Major-General R. F. E. Whittaker, O.B.E., T.D.  
Major D. C. Titchener-Barrett, Royal Artillery.

## ROYAL AIR FORCE

Squadron-Leader A. W. J. Clark, R.A.F.

**Trench Gascoigne Prize, 1940**

A Trench Gascoigne Prize of twenty guineas has been awarded to Major F. Evans, O.B.E., R.A.M.C., for his Essay submitted for the 1940 Competition. The Essay is published in this Journal.

## LIBRARY

**Hours of Opening**

The Library is open on Week Days from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., except Saturdays, when it is closed at Noon.

## JOURNAL

The Service Departments have signified that they will continue to give facilities for the publication of the R.U.S.I. JOURNAL, and serving officers are invited to offer suitable contributions.

Matter which might be of value to the enemy must, of course, be entirely eliminated; but there is still ample scope for professional articles relating to former campaigns, especially the War 1914-18, which might contain useful lessons at the present time; also contributions of a general Service character, such as Strategic Principles, Command and Leadership, Morale, Staff Work, Naval, Military and Air Force history, customs and traditions.

## CHANGES OF ADDRESS

Members are particularly requested to notify any change of address which will affect the dispatch of their JOURNALS.

Such notifications should be received by the 10th of the month preceding publication; i.e., by 10th January, April, July and October.

## MUSEUM

### War Exhibits

Members and others interested in the R.U.S.I. Museum are asked to keep a look out for relics of the present war of very special interest and to arrange for them to be preserved in a place of safety pending the Museum being re-opened.

Consideration of space will inevitably preclude the acceptance of more than a limited number of small articles ; but the Council desire to ensure that the Museum shall continue to represent the greatest achievements of the Services, their commanders, officers and men, throughout the ages. Personal relics of special distinction will in future, as in the past, be particularly acceptable.

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## WAR DIARY

The War Diary, which has been appearing each quarter in the JOURNAL, is being republished in Volume form.

Volume I, covers the first year of the War—from 3rd September, 1939, to 31st August, 1940—and contains a map showing the "Operations of the B.E.F. in Belgium and Northern France, May, 1940."

A limited number of copies are being bound in stiff paper cover ; price 2s. 6d., packing and postage 4d. Orders for these can be received now.

Arrangements are also being made to reprint a large number of extra copies suitable for better binding with future volumes of the Diary.

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**THE SINEWS OF WAR  
A CONVOY PASSING THE DOVER STRAITS**

# THE JOURNAL

of the

## Royal United Service Institution

Vol. LXXXVI.

FEBRUARY, 1941.

No. 541.

[Authors alone are responsible for the contents of their respective Papers. All communications, except those for perusal by the Editor only, should be addressed to the Secretary, Royal United Service Institution.]

### THE HIGHER COMMANDER

#### GENERAL WAVELL'S VIEWS <sup>1</sup>

THERE are, obviously, many ways in which one can approach the subject of high command and the higher commander: historically—tracing its manifestations and developments from the earliest times; contemporaneously—dealing with the commanders of the late war and the present state of generalship; or futuristically—forecasting conditions in wars to be. For the first I am deficient in the knowledge, for the second I lack the courage, for the third I have not the imagination. What I have set myself to do in this lecture is: firstly, to define the essential qualifications for a commander—past, present or future, with a few examples from the past—the British past as far as possible; secondly, to consider the modern conditions in which high command has to be exercised; and thirdly, which is the only useful part of the lecture (if indeed it proves to be useful at all), to suggest any measures which can be taken now to produce adequate commanders in war.

One difficulty that I found when I started to define the essentials of generalship was that there are two quite different types of commander, irrespective of the rank they hold; and what is applicable to one type is not always applicable to the other. There is the man fitted for independent command, confident in his knowledge and ability, and delighting in responsibility; from his type are drawn those impressive figures that historians have elected to call "the great captains." And there is the other type, the competent executive General—excellent at handling and administering troops under the orders of a superior, but apt to be at a loss when placed in sole command. An army needs both types; the difficulty often is to recognize which is which and to prevent the wrong one being "pulled out of the hat." An excellent executive commander often fails when on his own, while the good independent

<sup>1</sup> This report of a lecture, given by Major-General (now General) Sir Archibald Wavell to the Institution, is republished from the Journal of February, 1936

commander is sometimes a difficult subordinate. I cannot hope to differentiate between the two types throughout my lecture, but I will ask you to bear the distinction in mind, and I will simply define the term "higher commander" as a divisional commander or better.

A second difficulty is that the functions and qualifications of a General in peace differ considerably from those required of him in war. Hence Generals with great peace reputations often fail in war, while those who have made their names in war are not always good trainers of troops in peace. To put it as briefly as possible, in peace the "head" is perhaps of more importance than the "heart"; in war the "head" is of no value without the "heart." In this connection, something told me long ago by a mountain-gunner friend came back to my mind while I was considering the essential qualifications of a General. He said—whether truly or not I have never ascertained—that in the old days, whenever a new design of mountain gun was submitted to the Artillery Committee, that august body had it taken to the top of a tower some hundred feet high, and thence dropped on to the pavement below. If it was still capable of functioning, it was given further trial; if not, it was rejected as flimsy. The committee reasoned that mules and mountain guns might easily fall down the *khud* side and must be capable of surviving so trivial a misadventure. On similar grounds, rifles and automatic weapons submitted to the Small Arms Committee are, I understand, buried in mud for forty-eight hours or so before being tested for their rapid firing and other qualities. I am not suggesting that we should apply the same physical tests to our Generals, but I am trying to draw a mental parallel. The mind of a General in war is apt to be buried, not merely for forty-eight hours but for days and weeks, in the mud and fog of unreliable information and uncertain factors; and may at any time receive from an unsuspected move of the enemy, an unforeseen accident, a treacherous turn in the weather and so forth, a bump equivalent to a drop of at least a hundred feet on to something hard. Delicate mechanism is of little use in war, and this applies to the mind of the commander as well as to his body; to the spirit of an army as well as to the weapons and instruments with which it is equipped. All material of war, including the General, must have a certain solidity, a high margin over the normal breaking strain. It is sometimes argued whether war is an art or a science: I know of no branch of art or science in which rivals are at liberty to throw stones at the artist or scientist, and to steal his tools and destroy his materials while he is working—always against time—on his picture, statue or experiment. Under such conditions, how many of the great masterpieces of art or discoveries of science would have been produced? No,



the civil comparison to war must be that of a game, and a very rough and dirty game for which a robust physique and robust mind are required—those are the first essentials.

Before giving you my own views on the qualifications of a higher commander, I will quote one of the earliest definitions I have been able to find of the virtues, military and otherwise, that a General should possess, so that you may judge how far the modern conception has altered. A Greek military expert, writing nearly two thousand years ago, says this of higher commanders: "A General must be continent, sober, frugal, hardworking, middle-aged, eloquent, a father of a family, and member of an illustrious house. In addition, a General should be polite, affable, easy of approach, and cool-headed."

I propose to consider the essential qualities of a modern high commander under three heads—physical, moral, and mental. The physical attributes are courage, health and youth. Personal appearance we need not worry about: an imposing presence can be a most useful asset, but good Generals, as they say of good racehorses, "run in all shapes." Physical courage we are apt to take for granted: it is not so essential a factor in reaching high rank as in the old days of close-range fighting, but it still has a very considerable importance to-day in determining the degree of risk a commander will take to see for himself what is going on—and I do not see how any General can properly exercise command without constantly risking his person to make a very close acquaintance with the terrain he has to fight over and with the situation on his front by personal reconnaissance, both from the ground and in the air.

Health is, of course, most important; but it is a relative quality: we would, I imagine, sooner have on our side Napoleon sick than many of his opponents whole. A great spirit can rule in a frail body, as Wolfe and others have shown us. Marlborough during his great campaigns would probably have been ploughed by many a medical board.

Next comes the vexed and delicate question of age. The ancient poets have pointed to the scandal and absurdity of old men at war and old men in love; but at exactly what age a General ceases to be dangerous to the enemy and a Don Juan to the other sex is not so easy to determine. With lovers, the age of the body may be the chief deterrent to the seeking of fresh conquests; with Generals, it should be, though it seldom is, the age of the brain. One can point to Hannibal, Alexander, Napoleon, Wellington, Wolfe—to name only a few—as proof that the highest prizes of war are for the young men; on the other hand, Julius Cæsar, Cromwell and certain others *began* their serious soldiering well over the age of forty; Marlborough was fifty-four when he won his

first great victory at Blenheim ; Turenne's last campaign, at sixty-three, is said to have been his boldest and best ; Moltke, perhaps the most competent of the moderns, made his name at the age of sixty-six and confirmed his reputation at seventy ; Foch at sixty-seven still possessed energy, originality and vitality. In making comparisons with the past, we must remember that men develop later nowadays ; to go back a hundred and fifty years, Wellington, Wolfe, Moore, Craufurd were all commissioned at the age of fifteen, and some of them saw service soon after joining. Also, Northern races like the British mature later, and perhaps last longer, than Southern or Eastern races. Who can really give exact values to the fire and boldness of youth as against the judgment and experience of riper years ? It must depend on the individual, and it is a question of the brain rather than of the body. If the mature mind has still the capacity to conceive and absorb new ideas, to withstand unexpected shocks and to put into execution bold and unorthodox designs, its superior knowledge and judgment will give it the advantage over youth. It is the General whose ideas have never travelled beyond the last war he was engaged in or has read of, and who will sanction no project that is not honoured by time and the Field Service Regulations, who is the real danger, whatever his age. Originality and daring are not always the prerogative of fiery youth : Lord Allenby was fifty-seven when he conceived and executed his final victory over the Turk—one of the most brilliant strategical designs of all military history ; and many young men would have succumbed to the physical exhaustion of the long drives in heat and dust over bumpy tracks that he undertook almost daily to visit his troops and from which he returned with unimpaired energy.

Let us leave here, for the time being at any rate, this problem of youth and age, merely taking note of my own opinion that a British General's career as such should begin, if possible, by promotion to Major-General between the ages of forty and forty-five in peace. The age at which he should retire I will leave to your individual opinions. In war reduce ages by five to ten years all round.

Now we come to moral qualities : these must precede the mental—for no amount of study and learning will make a man a leader unless he has the natural qualities of one, and the soldier, like other humans, is governed by the heart rather than by the head. I do not propose to enter into any long discussion of these ; they are known to you all and are well set forth in the beginning of the latest edition of Training Regulations. I will mention only the barest essentials : a leader must have what we call " personality "—which is simply knowing what you want and being determined to get it ; he must have a genuine interest

in and knowledge of humanity—the raw material of his trade. Most vital of all, he must be gifted with what we call the fighting spirit or the will to win: we all recognize it in sport—the man who refuses to acknowledge defeat, who always comes back at you, who plays his best when the game seems lost or hangs in the balance; the modern highbrow probably defines it as having a “superiority complex.” There are other qualities I might expand on—loyalty, straightness, simplicity—the supposed soldierly virtues; but you all know them and recognize them when you see them, or the lack of them, in your leaders. A commander can fool his superiors most or even all the time, but he cannot fool his subordinates even half the time.

If I had to take one quality as the mark of the really great commander, as distinguished from the ordinary General, I would call it the spirit of adventure. He must, in fact, have at least a touch of the gambler in him. As Napoleon himself said: “If the art of war consisted merely in not taking risks, glory would be at the mercy of very mediocre talent.”

We have now decided approximately on the physical and moral composition of our commander. He should be as active as possible—in mind as well as in body: he must be quite determined to know for himself—alive or dead—the conditions of battle on his front; he must be human; his character must be such that his troops will be confident of receiving square meals and a square deal and his superiors of receiving loyal support; he must know what he wants, and what he wants most must be victory.

Now for his mental make-up. Many have in the past risen to the highest ranks, and have even won victories, with little addition to the foregoing qualities in the way of mental equipment except a camp-kit knowledge of strategy and tactics, and a wardrobe knowledge of the Dress Regulations. But times have changed, and we want rather more now. I think we shall agree that all military learning must be based on a solid foundation of common sense. Writers and artists, who deal in ideas, may treat them with imaginative brilliance. Facts, with which the soldier is mainly concerned, demand imaginative common sense, that is to say, foresight based on what the French call *le sens du praticable*—knowledge of what is and what is not practical. Add to this a realization that war, especially modern war, is not a narrow professional activity but that it covers practically the whole field of human life, and we have the type of mind required by the soldier. Now to what branches of study should he apply this mind—for without study even these excellent qualities will be largely wasted? The technicalities of his trade must come first, and a really sound knowledge of administra-

tion, organization, and transportation is the proper basis of technical military knowledge, rather than strategy and tactics. All the great commanders have had this understanding of the principles and practice of movement and administration—the “logistics” of war, some call it; it is the lack of this knowledge that puts what we call “amateur strategists” wrong, not the principles of strategy themselves, which can be apprehended in a very short time by any reasonable intelligence. A study of administration, beginning with that of his own unit, must, therefore, be the foundation of an ambitious officer’s learning. Some are, however, inclined to consider this the end instead of the means and to immerse themselves in the trivialities of the trade at the expense of outside knowledge. A broad outlook is absolutely essential for anyone who aspires to high command.

A high commander—and the higher the more so, will have to deal increasingly with statesmen, politicians, and other civilians of his own nationality, and with soldiers of other nationalities. Unless he has a real gift that way he had better not try to talk their language, but the more general knowledge he has of their characteristics and point of view, the better.

We have now got thus far with our higher commander: he is active in brain and body, bold and determined; he has a solid foundation of common sense, and a thorough knowledge of the technical possibilities of the instrument he wields; but he is broadminded in his general outlook. Before passing on to consider the likelihood or otherwise of finding or implanting such qualities in the modern professional soldier and the conditions in which these qualities have to be exercised if and when we have found them, we may pause to consider very briefly the relations between the General and his troops—between the leader and the led. The subject would require several lectures in itself, and has been the theme of many books; it is certainly an important one for the higher commander, who must, as I have already said, have a real interest in humanity and human behaviour. What is it that brings about sympathy, or the reverse, between the crowd and its leader: is it his words, his actions or some mysterious emanation of his spirit; the prestige of his position, or simply the fact of a common purpose? The psychological relations of a modern army with its leader form an interesting study: the professional man-at-arms has given place to the hastily trained but better educated citizen; whether education has had much effect on collective psychology is, however, doubtful. Modern developments have removed the General’s person from the close contact with his troops of former days; broadcasting and television may perhaps restore it. Let us content ourselves here by saying that our



General should have at least a touch, whether natural or acquired, of the showman or impresario. The pomp and circumstance of war have departed altogether from the battlefield; but off it, and sometimes even on it, a little showmanship is still of value: to run an item at a tattoo is not bad training for a commander. Read, for instance, how the young Bonaparte at his first success—the capture of Toulon, built a battery in such an exposed position that his superiors said that no-one would be found to man it; he put on a notice-board "The Battery of Men Without Fear," and it was always fully manned. Read also of the ceremonial with which the Emperor Napoleon presented eagles or decorations to his troops; or how the French General Gouraud reviewed a division on the beach at Gallipoli by moonlight—the enemy being too close for daylight parades. The British are inclined to distrust any exuberance of display in their commanders, who in their turn are for the most part unlikely to give way to it; but they have usually known the value of the right gesture or word at a crisis—witness Haig's ride up the Menin road on the critical day of the Ypres battle, or his famous "Backs to the wall" order.

Now let us examine the present conditions in which generalship has to be exercised, compare them with the past, and see if we can deduce any means of improving our output of commanders. Since war is prepared in peace, current political and social conditions must have a great influence on war and on generalship. The pace and progress of modern invention is of course the greatest factor in making future conditions of war so fluid and so uncertain. That means that a high commander must more than ever keep a flexible and open mind.

Military conditions, at any rate in Europe, while producing a high level of general professional competence, have been unfavourable to the growth of great generalship ever since the Germans under Von Roon and Moltke democratized and professionalized war some seventy-five years ago. The conditions they created—great masses of partially trained men, limited the possibilities of manoeuvre; the fact that war started at full blast immediately mobilization was complete meant that there was little time for Generals to train themselves to new conditions or for the lumber of peace-time leaders and peace-time ideas to disappear before they could do much damage. The size and complexity of war has put its direction in the hands of a number of specialists rather than one outstanding general practitioner; while its vast expense and the extent of the upheaval caused to national life makes the intervals between great wars longer, so that there is even more time than usual for the lessons of the last war, on which all armies train, to become stale, flat, and unprofitable. Much of the really original matter in an



army is lost by evaporation in peace, when only the safe, steady, and ordinary rise: in peace there are too many regulations, too little independence of thought. Conditions in the immediate past have thus not been favourable to the growth of great generalship; I am going to suggest later on that in the immediate future they may be.

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A knowledge of the psychology of the ordinary un-military citizen, of whom in the future all great armies will be composed, should be part of the knowledge of their leaders—the professional officers. But it is particularly as regards the higher commanders and their relations with statesmen that I wish to enlarge a little. At a time when their relations should be at the closest, the tendency is, as a result of the happenings of the late war, for them to become even further estranged. Everywhere in books on that war narrowness of outlook and professional pedantry are charged against the soldiers, who in their turn are inclined to ascribe their difficulties to ignorant “political interference.” On the merits of such controversy I have no intention of entering. I only wish to point out to the Army that their most distinguished commanders had very considerable political experience before they became successful soldiers. “Political” Generals are anathema to the military tradition; yet an imposing list of them can be made; Cromwell was for many years a member of Parliament—remarkable chiefly for the untidiness and eccentricity of his dress—before he took to soldiering; Marlborough had had far more experience of political intrigue than of military service when he began his career as a conqueror; Wellington had been a member of both Irish and British parliaments before he took up his first military command; Sir John Moore sat in parliament; so did Craufurd, the leader of the Light Division; and Graham, afterwards Lord Lynedoch, founder of the “Senior,” who first took to soldiering at forty-four. It is, in fact, difficult to find an example of a great commander whose experiences and career have been purely military. Alexander, Napoleon, and other warrior-kings were of course heads of the State as well as leaders of its armies. In ancient Rome, to have passed through all the ranks of the magistracy, i.e., of the civil administration of the State, was an indispensable qualification for command in the field. In classical Greece, soldiers and statesmen were interchangeable: you may recall the story of Cleon and Nicias in the Peloponnesian war between Athens and Sparta; the demagogue Cleon, leader of the opposition, fiercely criticized in the Athenian Senate the conduct of a campaign by the cautious conservative Nicias; the latter, thinking to corner his opponent, turned on him with a challenge: “Go you then and take command and see if you can do any better.” Unfortunately for Nicias, and unfortunately for Athens in the long run, Cleon won a striking though lucky victory.

Interchangeability between the statesman and the soldier passed for ever, I fear, in the last century. The Germans, as we have seen, professionalized the trade of war, and modern inventions, by increasing its technicalities, have specialized it: it is much the same with politics, professionalized by democracy. No longer can one man hope to exercise both callings, though both are branches of the same craft, the governance of men and the ordering of human affairs. In acquiring proficiency in his calling, however, the politician has many advantages over the soldier; he is always "in the field," while the soldier's opportunities of practising his trade in peace are few and artificial; he may be compared to a man learning to be a M.F.H. by practising with an electric hare in a riding school, varied by an occasional drag-hunt in the open—once every ten years for a Corps Commander since the last war. The politician, who has to persuade and confute, must keep an open and flexible mind, accustomed to criticism and argument. The mind of the soldier, who commands and obeys without question, is apt to be fixed, drilled, and attached to definite rules. The comparison need not be taken further; but that each should understand the other better is essential for the conduct of modern war. It is perhaps worth mentioning that probably the best and wisest strategist of the late war, Von Falkenhayn, took most account of political considerations.

Now, for a moment, let us contrast modern conditions of battle with those of the past, and, in order to do so, take one or two snapshots from history. Marlborough at Blenheim, after placing the batteries himself and riding along his whole front, lunched on the battlefield under cannon fire, waiting for his colleague Eugene on the right flank, four miles away—a great distance for those days. Napoleon at Austerlitz could see with his own eyes the enemy expose himself hopelessly and irretrievably to the prepared counterstroke, and could judge the exact moment at which to launch it. Wellington at Salamanca, having seen his opponent make a false move, had only to issue a few verbal orders when he could turn with assurance to the Portuguese representative with the remark: "*Mon cher Alava, Marmont est perdu.*" Even at Sedan, sixty years later, Moltke and his Imperial Master could watch practically the whole agony of the French army from a small hill close by. In the conditions of the late war no battalion commander, launching his reserve company, had anything like such a clear picture of the situation as any of these, while the Commander-in-Chief was not on the battlefield at all, but sitting in an office many miles back or restlessly pacing the garden of a château waiting for news that seemed never to come, and which, when it came, was usually misleading.

So far I have given you a rather gloomy impression of the present conditions of generalship. Now for some encouragement as to the future.

There are new forces to handle, both on the ground and in the air, with potentialities that are largely unexplored. Some of them were partially exploited in the late war, but have since been greatly improved and extended; some have been only recently developed; some are still wholly untried. The commander with the imagination—the genius in fact—to use the new forces may yet have his name written amongst the “great captains,” but he will not win that title lightly or easily. Consider for a moment the qualifications he will require: on the ground he will have to handle forces moving at a speed and ranging at a distance far exceeding that of the most mobile cavalry of the past; a study of naval strategy and tactics, as well as those of cavalry, will be essential to him; some ideas on his position in battle and the speed at which he must make his decisions may be derived from the battle of Jutland, but very little indeed from operations in the Long Valley and on the Basingstoke Canal, or indeed in any of the training areas available to the Army at home. Needless to say, he must be able to handle air forces with the same knowledge as forces on land. It seems to me immaterial whether he is a soldier who has really studied the air or an airman who has really studied land forces; it is the combination of the two, never the action of one alone, that will bring success in a future war. It sounds as if we require a superman—a master of strategy and tactics at sea, on land, in the air; but there is not really such very great difference between the three. In addition to this his studies must have a background of solid common sense and a knowledge of humanity, on whose peculiarities, and not those of machines, the whole practice of warfare is ultimately based.

I have tried to put before you some reflections on the essentials of generalship and on the conditions in which modern generalship has to be exercised. I propose to discuss in the last part of this lecture what can be done in peace towards the production of a good cadre of higher commanders. As I have pointed out, the days of frequent and leisurely wars, when it was possible to select and prove commanders in the earlier stages, are over. Peace training is a poor substitute, but we must make the best of it. It is, I think, of little use setting out with the idea of raising a “great captain”: the “great captain” is what is known in scientific parlance as a “sport,” i.e., in the words of the dictionary, “an animal which varies suddenly or singularly from the normal type, and cannot usually be perpetuated.” But obviously the higher the normal type, the more likely it is to produce a valuable “sport.” A man may buy or breed from the best class of bloodstock for many years, and still not get a Derby winner; but if his purchases are made at a hunter show or cart-horse parade, it is quite certain that

he never will. What we must aim at is to produce a high normal type of commander. What can be done to further that desirable end ?

In considering the problem, we have to take into account the raw material, the system of training, and the method of promotion and selection. We have plenty of good material : no-one can pretend that the profession of arms attracts the highest quality of brains, but there is amongst those who join the Army a potentially high level of robust common sense ; I say "potentially" because common sense, like any other quality, can only be fully developed by training. Again, we have in our system of brevets probably as good a method as can be devised in peace for selecting our future leaders early and securing their promotion at a suitable age. I suggest, however, that we use it too timidly ; that the number of promotions by brevet might be increased and the age lowered. An argument often advanced against any increase of promotion by selection is that it is essential to keep a contented corps of officers ; and this is too often taken to mean that the average, reasonably efficient, reasonably hard-working officer must never see a more efficient and more lively junior go over his head. Personally, I believe that an increase in the proportion of promotions for merit would do much both to attract more brains into the Army and to raise the level of work and efficiency all round. As I said earlier, our aim should be that those selected for promotion to Major-General should include at least a considerable proportion of live, energetic, broadminded Brigadiers and Colonels of about forty to forty-five years of age. That is, I fancy, the approximate age at which a man in the business world forces himself out of the "plodders" ranks into the high positions, if he is ever going to do so. Though there must be many difficulties in the way, it is obviously desirable that officers of the British and Indian armies should be on a common list for further advancement after they reach the rank of full Colonel.

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Now I come to the real heart of the matter—the atmosphere, traditions, and spirit in which and on which the Army lives and by which its whole training is directed and coloured. A French philosopher has said "man's two great concerns since he has existed have been, first, to create a network of traditions ; and afterwards to destroy them when their beneficial effects have worn themselves out. Civilization is impossible without traditions and progress impossible without the destruction of these traditions." I suggest that we have come to a stage when we must reconsider some of the traditions and methods on which the training of our leaders is founded : we are overhauling and modernizing the machinery of war, but we are doing little to modernize the directing



brains—the officer. If we want to have a high level of command at the top, we must begin right at the bottom before the good, keen young subaltern starts to become bored, disillusioned, parochial and barrack-bound. The Jesuits, I believe, claim that if they can have the training of a child for its first five years, no subsequent training can destroy their influence. Much the same applies to the Subaltern; it is the training at the R.M.A. and R.M.C. and his first few years with his unit that colour his whole career. I suggest that in this first vital impression there is at present too much stress on drill and routine, on spit and polish, on details of the regulations and of dress, at the expense of mental liveliness and independence of thought.

It is easy enough to indulge in vague generalities about “a freer atmosphere” and the modernization of education; it is quite another matter to make practical proposals for securing them. I feel, therefore, that since I have so far ranged like a rather wild and undisciplined spaniel over a great deal of ground, and since such game as I have put up has mainly been out of shot, it is now incumbent on me to come to heel a little in the hope that we may take home one or two birds for the pot.

The average officer is from ten to thirteen years a Subaltern. No one can suggest that it takes the good keen intelligent officer more than five or six years at the most to master fully the regimental duties of a Subaltern, so that for a good deal of time in that rank he should be broadening his mind and improving his knowledge away from his unit. We are fortunate as an army in having plenty of scope for junior officers—in Colonial forces, and few commanding officers nowadays put any obstacle in the way of a Subaltern seeking to “better himself.” But there are, I think, certain directions in which these opportunities might be extended and improved. There could be no better training for the junior officer than to serve with the Royal Air Force for a few years. I would like to see a successful period of attachment to the Air Force count as highly towards nomination for the Staff College or accelerated promotion as a successful adjutancy now does. Interchange of officers between arms is promoted in principle, but it is very seldom carried out in practice: such attachments should be *ordered* by the War Office, be frequent, and be regarded as a recognition that the officer concerned was being considered as a likely candidate for early advancement in his profession.

My next suggestion costs nothing at all, but I believe it would effect a real improvement in the keenness and standard of training of all officers. It is that every officer of five years service and over should be reported



on annually as to the rank he is capable of holding in war, and should then as far as possible be trained in the duties of that rank, irrespective of the rank he actually holds. Thus a Subaltern reported as fit to command a squadron, battery or company on service should be treated as a squadron, battery or company commander at all tactical exercises without troops. Similarly a Captain or Major, or even an exceptional Subaltern of over ten years service, reported as fit to command a battalion in the field should be trained as such by the Brigadier. Field Officers reported as fit to command brigades should similarly be trained as such by the divisional commander. It should also be possible to arrange occasionally for these officers to hold their "war" ranks during an exercise with troops. I think that some such system might do much to increase the keenness and efficiency of the good officer. It might also help to place the Staff College in better proportion as an institution primarily for the training of Staff Officers and not the "onlie true begetter" of higher commanders.

I also suggest a stronger effort to broaden the basis of the Subaltern's knowledge and education. The entrance examination for Sandhurst or Woolwich includes a paper on general knowledge, and the syllabus at these colleges includes a certain proportion of non-military instruction given, however, almost entirely by military instructors. But once an officer joins his unit his general education ceases—except for his own efforts—and his subsequent instruction is purely military. I do not think this is either necessary or desirable, as it must tend to narrowness of outlook and interests. As a start towards encouragement of general education, I suggest that a non-military subject for winter study be set in addition to, or in substitution for, the present military history campaign.

So much for what one might call the pre-natal treatment of the higher commander. As regards his training when he has finally reached General's rank, I will make two proposals. No one can pretend that, under present conditions, he gets sufficient practice in command in the field: manœuvres are expensive and therefore infrequent, and at home lose much of their value by reason of the weakness of all units; but there seems no reason why large-scale Signal Exercises, in which all headquarters down to, say, battalions are represented at full strength, should not take place at much more frequent intervals. They would at least preserve the machinery of the higher command from much of the rust that it accumulates at present. My other plea is that the higher commander should have a much closer acquaintance with the work and ideas of the Air Force. In all future fighting, air action and ground action will be complementary, each dependent on the other. No one

should, I consider, hold the rank of higher commander without having had at least six months really close association with the Air Force within a few years of his promotion. With goodwill between the two Services, there should be no difficulty in ensuring this.

Whatever the methods of education or training, we must never lose sight of our essential mental foundations—common sense and a lack of pedantry. Our life in these democratic and professional days is so set about with regulations of every kind—civil and military, that it is continually necessary to remind oneself that war is not a matter of rules. The higher commander who goes to Field Service Regulations for tactical guidance inspires about as much confidence as the doctor who turns to a medical dictionary for his diagnosis. And no method of education, no system of promotion, no amount of common-sense ability is of value unless the leader has in him the root of the matter—the fighting spirit. Whatever mistakes they committed, however they differed from each other, the great leaders of the war, civil and military, such as Clemenceau, Foch, Lloyd-George, and Haig, had in common an unconquerable spirit. As one of them has said: "No battle was ever lost until the leader thought it so." This is the first and true function of the leader—never to think the battle or the cause lost.

One word more. The pious Greek when he had set up altars to all the great gods by name, added one more altar, "To the Unknown God." So, whenever we speak and think of the "great captains" and set up our military altars to Hannibal, Napoleon, Marlborough and their like, let us add one more altar: "To the Unknown Leader": that is to the good company, platoon or section leader, who carries forward his men or holds his post and often falls unknown. It is these who in the end do most to win wars. The British have been a free people and are still a comparatively free people; and though we are not, thank Heaven, a military nation, this tradition of freedom gives to our junior leaders in war a priceless gift of initiative. So long as this initiative is not cramped by too many regulations, by too much formalism, we shall, I trust, continue to win our battles—often in spite of our higher commanders.

## TRENCH-GASCOIGNE PRIZE ESSAY<sup>1</sup>

*Subject :*

**"HOW HAVE THE LESSONS OF THE WAR OF 1914-1918 BEEN  
CONFIRMED OR MODIFIED BY THE EXPERIENCES OF THE  
PRESENT WAR UP TO DATE?"**

By MAJOR FREDERIC EVANS, M.B.E., R.A.M.C.

CYNICS have said that the British always fight a war with ideas which were appropriate to the war before the last one. This has a basis of truth in all armies which have a continuous history and in which, therefore, ideas and equipment tend to become standardized. The standardization of equipment has two effects: the first is that design is bound largely to become static in order that production in large masses may be economically possible; the second is that the state of development of equipment conditions the progress of thought by its users. There we have the usual vicious circle; for it is a rare quality in all people, especially in practical people, to be able to think untrammelled by the things they use in fact and unconditioned by their existing environment. Too often progressive thinkers are regarded as cranks and their ideas as moonshine. There is, it is said, in the archives of the War Office a plan for a tank submitted in 1911. Upon the pigeon-holed dossier is written the laconic comment, "The man's mad." Yet to-day the idea of the moving armoured fortress is a basic one in the war of movement. Without imputing any carelessness or conscious prejudice to any of our military authorities, there seems to be in "standing armies" an innate conservatism of outlook which will always tend to make the introduction of new equipment and new methods a matter of some difficulty. Military people, especially, are prone to learn nothing and to forget nothing. The prerogative of rank also tends to inhibit the adoption of ideas arising from the younger generation. It can be seen that this is not mere obtuseness but rather something inherent in established military tradition and organization.

The resurgence of the German military machine under Hitler is an example in reverse of this principle. As a result of the Versailles Treaty the Germans were disarmed and thus presented with practically a blank sheet when they began once more to build up their army and air force. This was in reality a great advantage for them from the military point of view, for they were able to start afresh and untrammelled

<sup>1</sup> A Trench-Gascoigne prize has been awarded to this essay in the competition for 1940.

by existing equipment and organizations when the great re-armament programme was begun. In this German re-arming, especially, we have seen newly-applied ideas, new machines, and new co-ordinations achieve spectacular results. The great French army of five million men—most of them ensconced in a supposedly impregnable Maginot line—was put out of action in the course of a few short weeks. This was achieved by methods of attack employing with extraordinary enterprise an overwhelming weight of armoured and mechanical units in close co-operation with aircraft. Yet the casualties suffered on both sides were, by the standards of the war of 1914-1918, relatively small. Indeed it may be said that Germany's military successes in this war have been due, to a large extent, to her disarmament in 1919.

### THE LESSONS OF THE LAST WAR

What then were the lessons which the war of 1914-1918 taught us in the field of military enterprise? These were, especially in the light of recent events, clear cut and uncontroversial. They were there for all folk to see, and yet how few did see them in all their clarity and in proper relationship to one another? We have had the fatal handicap of having to graft on to our old machine the new developments and to co-ordinate with the outworn ideas those vital new ones which spell success.

*The First Lesson* was the importance of mechanization. War, it was shown, would become largely a matter of internal combustion engines rather than of big battalions. Even in the early days of the last war mechanical transport was beginning to oust horsed vehicles. The old London 'buses carrying infantry did yeoman service in France, even in 1914. Then came the ever-increasing flood of motor lorries, cars, ambulances and other specialized motor vehicles. Armoured cars appeared in the Egyptian desert and on the Russian front. The Army no longer always marched upon its feet but began to move upon wheels. This was the beginning of mechanized armies. Its great development towards wholly mechanized columns was inevitable. Yet the centuries-old idea of the marching infantryman persisted, just as love of horses was largely responsible for the retention of mounted units. The infantry division can perhaps march fifteen miles a day, the mechanized unit can motor two hundred. This is in itself a cardinal fact affecting all old conceptions of tactics and of strategy.

*Secondly*, there were the armoured units—or the tanks as they are most popularly called. It was this invention and its application in the skilful co-operation of these tanks with mopping up and consolidating infantry which broke the Western Front in 1918. Here was a peculiarly British idea—tardily received, perhaps, and tardily executed, yet applied



in time to help us to victory. Had tanks been available at Cambrai in 1917 in sufficient numbers and in the present variety of speeds, sizes and armaments the war might have been won in a few short weeks. Here, then, was a lesson of stupendous importance which was very obvious from the most conclusive events of the last war.

*The Third Lesson* was the importance of the air weapon, both for reconnaissance and for actual attack. This lesson, too, is self evident to those ready to learn. It was the realization of the almost complete control which could be exercised by a vast air preponderance which gave the Nazis at Munich a power to which no one could say nay without the danger, indeed the certainty, of devastating blows from the air. In the early days of the last war the aeroplane was used grudgingly as the cavalry was once used for observing the movements of the enemy. Then came co-operation with artillery for observing the effects of gunfire on enemy positions and territory. Eventually, with the rapid developments forced by the needs of the war, came its use for bombing troop concentrations and back areas. It was the British command of the air in 1918, plus the use of the tank, which turned the edge of the German attack and changed, almost miraculously, defeat on the Western Front into smashing victory.

The Germans, the Turks and the Bulgars in retreat were demoralized by aerial attack, thus hastening the success of our arms. To-day it seems incredible that this cardinal fact was not realized in subsequent policy. If we were bound to have economies in arms, then it was not by reductions in aircraft and tanks that they should have been effected, but in infantrymen and personnel. A small standing professional army should, it is evident, have been almost wholly mechanized and armoured, and wedded to an efficient and hard-striking air force. Further, the superb British genius and organization in manufacture would have made easy a complete mechanization of our striking forces. Instead, these assets were allowed to decay in a welter of unemployment. Clearly, old frameworks of organization and traditional ideas prejudiced the new developments and the British Army did not become in post-war years, as it should have become, a fast moving projectile of steel—the sharp scythe which the German Panzer divisions and dive bombers were in the Battle of France.

*The Fourth Lesson* was the dominant value of the control of the seas. This was a lesson which we were temperamentally and intellectually more ready to learn or at least to bear in mind. At the outbreak of this war our sea preparations were far less in arrears than were preparations in the other two fighting Services. Our control of sea communications in the last war gave us access to foodstuffs, raw material and manufactured



articles from anywhere in the world except from the Central Powers. The enemy's unlimited submarine campaign was his only serious bid to loosen the stranglehold which our sea power had fastened on him. Thus we were able to throw great armies into Gallipoli and Macedonia, Egypt, Palestine, Mesopotamia and East Africa, and to convey them there and back with remarkably few casualties. When the Germans, over a prostrate Russia, sought to expand into her Arctic ports and thereby circumvent the North Sea blockade of the British Navy, our command of the sea enabled us to occupy Murmansk and Archangelsk with their hinterland and to call check to this move. Without this control of sea communications the Allies could not have prevailed against the vast resources of men and material of the Central Powers. In the absence of this control American intervention would not have been possible. In reality, American foreign policy has always been based on British control of the sea routes: the Monroe Doctrine is a tacit acceptance of this fact which the United States would never seek to challenge, and even to-day it is well recognized that the British Navy in the Atlantic is the main shield of American isolationism and their chief protection against domination by German dictatorship.

*The Fifth Lesson* was the realization of the importance of propaganda—in its way a fomentor of "fifth columnist" activity. Propaganda against the enemy implies the breaking down of his moral resistance and the development of a sense of defeatism or of a revolutionary movement against the warring government. We heard much about "morale" in the last war: the word was freely used as part of the jargon of that period; nevertheless, it did represent a very real factor in ensuring the success or failure of the war effort. It was not nearly so important in earlier wars fought by small mercenary armies. Such campaigns were often unpopular, even with the victors, yet they little affected the normal life of the people, and so their unpopularity could be ignored by a strong and determined government. But the war of 1914-18, more than at any time before, brought into action all the resources, man power and financial strength of the countries engaged in it. British propaganda in the hands of people like Lord Northcliffe undermined the German confidence in their leaders and in themselves. This is referred to by Hitler in *Mein Kampf* as one of the main reasons for Germany's defeat.

That brings us to the *Sixth Lesson*, which was that future wars would tend to become—indeed, inevitably would become under modern conditions—total wars, wherein every man, woman and child would count and in which a supreme and complete national effort would be essential to success. The idea of "total" war is not a Nazi conception,

although their particular application of it may be characteristic of Nazi mentality. Total war is inherent in the struggle between modern great Powers armed with the products of modern science and industry and linked by modern instruments of communication like the press, the wireless, and the cinema.

*The Seventh Lesson* developed naturally from the Fifth and Sixth, and that was that war to-day must, if it lasts any length of time, become in effect if not in warlike action a world war. The interdependence of the modern world and the interlocking of interests which ought in a rational era to make for international co-operation, in actual fact and owing to the predatory aims of dissatisfied Powers result, when serious war starts anywhere, in repercussions all through the delicately balanced world structure. There can to-day be no major change in the political situation in any country without reactions all over the world. Aggression or acquisitiveness by any of the great Powers, if persisted in, must result, if not in world war, at least in world repercussions expressing themselves diplomatically, politically and economically. The world is one, but as yet it knows it not and feels in its wars the aches and pains of its constituent members who, were they politically educated, would realize the stupidity of a house divided against itself.

To point the *Eighth Lesson*, and coming again to tactical considerations, the last war demonstrated clearly that the entrenched and fortified position was not necessarily impregnable to a sufficiently well-conceived and directed attack. The Epic of Verdun serves only to show this truth in greater relief. The Hindenburg Line was smashed in the great attacks of the autumn of 1918, but it was broken by the daring enterprise of new methods and in the use of new machines of war.

Thus "defence in depth rather than merely in line" was a lesson which emerged from the last war. The German pill-boxes at Paschendaele and their machine-gun posts at strategic positions on the line of their retirement in the latter half of 1918 were witness to the necessity, and indeed the effectiveness, of strong points arranged in greater and greater depth inter-related and flexible in the process of defence. The pill-box was the answer to the tank—so far as an answer was possible to an exhausted and demoralized enemy. The "line," once broken by armoured mechanized attack, was shown to be useless and indeed a danger to the defenders.

Another—the *Ninth Lesson*—of tactical importance was the comparative ineffectiveness of naval action against fortified land positions. The great naval bases in the last war were practically immune from naval attack by the enemy except for the chance submarine. Land batteries, when sufficiently powerful, always have the advantage against

ships of war. Mines and other devices in fixed positions make naval action against them extremely hazardous. The Gallipoli campaign illustrates this fact perhaps best of all. Thus it was that the Germans were prepared to accept a one to three naval ratio with the British Navy, believing that their colossal air force would be the only effective method of attack against our ships and against naval bases strongly held by us.

To recount the *Tenth Lesson*—the speed of modern warfare—of its ships, its aeroplanes and its mechanized transport, spelt the doom of centralized forces moving leisurely to the point where danger threatened. The need, which began to appear quite clearly in the last war, is to-day for a greater localization of forces ready and competent for instant action and strong enough to save the situation until aid is received from the central reserves. As examples of this tendency we may cite the decision of the United States to have a two-ocean navy—one in the Atlantic and one in the Pacific. The Panama Canal was mainly intended to make such a two-ocean navy unnecessary for them; but the speed of events has necessitated a change in their policy. The American acquisition of leases from Britain of naval and air bases in the West Indies is evidence of the same realization of hard facts, and this tendency is bound to continue perhaps as far afield as Australia and Singapore.

Another example is the Russian army of the Far East—based upon Eastern Siberia—with its own air force, its own military and air bases, and its own local sources of supply.

*The Eleventh Lesson* may be expressed as the value of infiltration in attack as contrasted with the old idea of "advance all along the line." Orthodox military science has always shown a sensitiveness to dangers of outflanking, of enfilade fire and of any breaking up of an extended and "tidy" front. These principles were probably more appropriate to slow-moving columns of infantry or even cavalry which could be met everywhere by a resistance equal to it in kind. But the development of armoured divisions and of the bombing aeroplane acting speedily in co-operation and supported by columns rather than "lines" of mechanized infantry have brought a totally new factor into the picture.

This idea of infiltration and its success, within the limits of the resources available, was used to good effect by the Germans during the last war in their great attacks of March and April, 1918. These "fingers" of attack, pressed home by determined, well-armed, even fanatical troops, came within an ace of success. It was the superior resources of the Allies, supported by a growing flood of American troops, which turned the thrust aside, and this effect was hastened by our employment of

armoured vehicles and our achievement of aerial supremacy. Nevertheless, here was a new principle in attack which was in fact the writing on the wall as far as orthodox tactics were concerned.

*The Twelfth Lesson* can be described as the realization of the supreme importance of a vital and positive diplomacy. Diplomacy brought in Italy on our side in the last war, in spite of her commitments to the Triple Alliance. Diplomacy failed to keep Turkey as an ally, and this in turn affected Bulgarian policy in the same way. The crusade for a "world free for democracy" affected American opinion and caught the imagination of the neutrals everywhere. It was a dynamic clear-cut war aim just as much as "Remember Belgium" obtained a response from the crusading urge among all nations who believed in a world of good neighbours. The result was that States all over the world joined in the campaign to resist Imperial Germany's aggression. This promise of a better world, this expression of war aims which were clear to all peoples gave then to our diplomacy excellent opportunities to canalize world opinion and world effort into the anti-German cause. Associated with this lesson is the one of morale, described in the paragraph given to the Fifth Lesson. A morale based upon moral values showed greater staying power and a greater ability to withstand the nerve strain of the long-drawn-out war.

These are not the only lessons, but they are among the most important. They should not be regarded as isolated from one another but rather as facets of a problem which must be viewed as a whole. No attempt has been made to arrange them in logical order; rather are they a "thinking aloud," as it were, about the war of 1914-1918 in its varied ramifications and occurrences.

Now let us see how these new trends or new values have emerged in the course of the present war.

## THE PRESENT WAR

### MECHANIZATION AND OIL SUPPLIES

The results of these trends are self evident. The modern army moves on swift turning wheels. Troop-carrying units and petrol-supply companies are examples of new units adapted to this new demand for speed of movement at all costs. Debussing takes the place of deployment from the column of route. The German *autobahnen* or great arterial roads are an expression of the obvious fact that road transport of troops, guns and supplies would be of first class importance in a Continental war. Both in mobilization and in the actual campaign, motor transport has come into its own. Vehicles have been made not merely for use on the roads but fitted with tracks to enable them to cross the open country.



The well-groomed teams of artillery horses have disappeared before the gun tractor moved by the prosaic internal combustion engine. The tempo of troop movements has been speeded up many hundred per cent. and an army of infantrymen on foot cannot hope to compete on equal terms with the new legions on wheels. The significance of this mechanization was made clear in the war against Poland where the resistance of old-fashioned infantry on foot, in spite of incredible bravery, could not be maintained for any length of time against the rapier-like advances of mechanized troops. The race was to the swift and the battle to the strong. God was on the side of metal and movement, not of men.

The vast array of tanks of all shapes, sizes and performance is typical of the most advanced armies of to-day. In Poland, in Norway, in the Low Countries and in the Battle of France the German armoured divisions swept all before them except when they were met by resolute troops well equipped with tanks of their own and efficient anti-tank guns. Yet force of numbers of armoured divisions prevailed against the various "islands" of quality, and the lesson from events in this war surely is that masses of infantry are of little account against well led and intrepid armoured units. Armoured divisions must be met by armoured divisions. The analogy of the torpedo-boat will assist us in our consideration of this problem. The torpedo-boat as a menace to battleships was countered by the torpedo-boat "destroyer." We must develop a "tank destroyer" designed not so much for the attack of strong points and to cover advance of infantry but for the specific purpose of putting attacking tanks out of action.

This war has already shown that we should concentrate much more upon the development of armoured and anti-tank mechanisms and units than upon the raising of huge armies of infantrymen. With our enormous manufacturing resources, especially in engineering, associated with those of our American friends—we almost may say allies—we should concentrate upon more and yet more mechanization and armour. A smaller army fortified by a vast fleet of lethal vehicles with a penetration of mobile gunfire, unheard of yet in warfare, will serve us better than the raising of scores of divisions of the old infantry type. It is probably true that, instead of recruiting armies of millions in the old style, hundreds of thousands of these men would be better employed in our great engineering and armaments works forging the "sharp scythe" for a smaller but more highly trained and specialized army to use. This may appear to be heresy, but the experience of the last war, emphasized still more in this one, shows that men cannot stand against machines without machines of their own in preponderance or at least in equality and handled with greater skill, endurance and enterprise than the enemy.



A corollary of this fact of mechanization is the obvious importance of the world's oil supplies, and strategy must develop in the direction of the control of the great oil-fields. This may prove a more powerful primary urge than the invasion of Britain. The key points in oil strategy are of course Rumania, Baku and the Russian oilfields, Irak and Iran, the Dutch East Indies and the Mexican and American oil wells.<sup>1</sup>

#### THE AIR ARM

Predominance in the air secured by the Allies in 1918 was one of the prime factors in the victory of their arms. Germany in this war has pinned her faith to bombardment from the air rather than artillery fire on land and from warships at sea. Her great numerical superiority of bombing and fighter aircraft was the main reason for Mr. Chamberlain's diplomacy at Munich. It was the only course open unless we were prepared to suffer martyrdom in the annihilation of our cities from the air. The German bombers were, before Munich, all warmed up ready to blot Prague out of existence, as they have since blotted out Warsaw, Rotterdam and many a fair city in Picardy. Quantity and mass production were the German aim, and British quality has, where it could be brought to bear, shown its value against this quantity. It is clear that no nation without adequate air power can withstand pressure by a great Power armed with armadas of bomber aircraft. Merely as a threat they have already proved effective, as for example in the occupation of Denmark and later of Rumania. Other Balkan countries appear to be in the shadow of this same threat. The "buffer state" is no longer a protection now that frontiers are crossed with ease and at great speed by military aircraft. Buffer states or small neutrals set in between the great Powers have ceased to have any strategical meaning, with distances annihilated and the reduction of their petty resistance a matter of the greatest ease. Perhaps this implies that we have seen the end of the complete and sovereign independence of many small nations. If they had been absorbed by consent and by gentle means into a European federation, that might have been well; but it is the use or threat of the use of force, and particularly of aerial force, in the bullying and absorption of those small nations which is intolerable.

The use of aircraft in reconnaissance, developed greatly in the last war, has been widely extended in this one. Their employment for observing naval movements and for spotting and even attacking submarines are accepted features of the war of to-day. The Fleet Air Arm as the "eyes

<sup>1</sup> Special point is given to this observation by the trend of German strategy in this war.—EDITOR.

of the fleet" has done yeoman service. The use of photography for accurate mapping and faithful recording of damage caused by bombing is to-day a commonplace. This is one of the lessons of the last war which has been well learned by both the Navy and the Royal Air Force.

The belief of the Germans that aerial bombing of ships and harbours would neutralize our naval preponderance has not been, so far, justified by events. By comparison with the number of bombs dropped upon warships on the open sea and in the harbours, the hits or near misses have been remarkably few. The development of good anti-aircraft defences, especially for dealing with low-flying aircraft, has had much to do with this, as precision bombing from high levels upon such a small and elusive target as a ship is extremely difficult.

Similarly, attacks upon convoys of merchantmen by aircraft have not yielded the results expected by the enemy. So far the air arm has not been a conclusive challenge to sea power and, short of unexpected and spectacular improvements in the methods of attacking ships, it is not likely to be such a challenge.

But the development of the dive bomber has given obviously successful results by the Germans in this war. They have learned this lesson thoroughly, and the Norwegian campaign showed how resolute troops were no match for average troops when the advance of the latter was covered by these bombers. Without fighter aircraft to engage them, infantry are in a most precarious and unenviable position. The evacuation of the B.E.F. from Belgium, through Dunkirk, was only made possible by the herculean efforts of the R.A.F. fighter squadrons. Air power can only be met by air power—that is a lesson of the last war which is proving only too true in this one. Lack of aircraft coupled with insufficient tanks were the cause of the French offering such feeble resistance to the enemy's onslaughts, both in the air and on the ground. Personal bravery is of no avail against these mechanisms. Bayonets, however numerous, are not enough. Only machines can match machines in combat.

The influence of aerial bombardment upon civilian morale was shown in the last war to have little effect upon the outcome where the people were united, convinced of the justice of their cause and resolutely led. Indeed, it had just the opposite effect in this country because it strengthened the national resolution to resist. In this war another factor has to be added to these provisos and that is sufficient parity in the air between the combatants concerned. Aerial bombardment of the civil population in Poland, Holland, Belgium and France, without any apparent effective counter-attack, defence or reprisal, undoubtedly did depress the will to resist. It also partly caused the refugee problem

—again a matter of morale; and unquestionably the bombing of civilians was a major factor in the decision of Holland, Belgium and France to lay down their arms. So long as the Royal Air Force are a match, even if outnumbered at first, for the German *Luftwaffe*, and there is no obvious overwhelming of British resistance in the air, then civil population will be saved the worst of aerial attack and, as has been shown by all those of our cities which have suffered under the aerial *blitzkrieg*, they will not be broken in spirit. Hammer blows in return assist that same resolution, and these are being delivered by the R.A.F. in ever increasing measure.

But it must be realized that no civilian morale can be maintained indefinitely if the enemy's air attacks go unanswered. Moreover, factories cannot continue to function and communications must become disrupted. The most elaborate air raid precautions are valueless without the positive effect of aerial power. To disappear like troglodytes into the ground will not assist us if the enemy holds all the aerial aces. The only answer to the bomber is the fighter, the anti-aircraft gun, and the counter bomber. France neglected her air force and has paid the penalty for this neglect. But these lessons were clear for all to see from events which occurred in the later phases of the last war.

It is unnecessary to labour this point. Complete air supremacy must spell victory to whichever side achieves it, for no population in the crowded cities of Western Europe can sustain incessant bombardment from the air without hope of a turn of events in their favour and of reprisals upon the enemy. This, then, should be a major aim in the conduct of the War—to achieve as quickly as possible air supremacy in overwhelming degree. When this is achieved, linked with our economic blockade and with the threat of a highly mechanized land force, the war should very soon be over, and probably without actual fighting in the extended sense of the last war.

#### CONTROL OF SEA COMMUNICATIONS

Perhaps the most self-evident of all the lessons to be learned from the last war is the fact that, in spite of the spectacular success of the German army on land, the blockade exercised by the British Navy brought increasing pressure to bear upon the whole of the enemy's economic structure, so that in the latter part of 1918 it collapsed. Indirectly this command of the sea brought the United States into the war. The enemy's unrestricted submarine campaign and his attacks upon ships like the "*Lusitania*" challenged the accepted customs and laws of the seas. In time, opinion in the U.S.A. was so inflamed that their entry into the war became inevitable. Then it was the British Navy which ensured

the safe conduct of American troops to Europe and made their effective co-operation in the war a possibility.

To-day, again, the naval factor is of especial importance. The co-operation of Turkey, Greece and Egypt is only possible because we command the sea routes of the Mediterranean. The loss of French co-operation and of French naval bases in that sea is a serious handicap; but, even so, the Navy has been able to keep the Mediterranean open and to reinforce and assist the British armies in the Middle East. It would be dangerous to prophesy about the future, but of one thing we can be sure and that is that the Navy, in strictly naval actions, will be able to do more than hold its own if the enemy's fleet can be brought to action.

It is Britain's command of sea communications which is influencing the foreign policy of the United States again in this war. They have realized that if our naval might were destroyed the Atlantic would be open to Nazi and Fascist expansion into the Western Hemisphere. In fact, to-day our Navy benefits America almost as much as it does Britain. The transfer of the fifty "over-age" U.S. destroyers is in reality a polite fiction for what is virtually naval assistance. It is significant that the naval bases to be used by the U.S.A. on British possessions in the North Atlantic are *leased* for that purpose for a period of ninety-nine years. This virtually implies an alliance or at least an agreement between Britain and the United States as regards all policies affecting this part of the world: you cannot quarrel with your ground landlord as you can with someone from whom you have purchased your house as a freehold!

#### PROPAGANDA AND MORALE

In this war it would seem that it is our enemies who have profited most from the lesson of the last war of the value of propaganda. The arrival of the loudspeaker put a new weapon into the hands of propagandists, and the Fascist and Nazi movements were quick to seize upon it and to use it to their own ends. Even a lie if repeated frequently enough and with sufficient emphasis will be believed by uncritical people. Words spoken through a microphone and received by the loudspeaker are given an even greater credulity than the "printed word." It can almost be said that but for the arrival of broadcasting both the Italian and the German totalitarian revolutions would have been impossible. Wireless speech is indeed the instrument of "total" propaganda. It was propaganda and the work of the Fifth Column which made the German entry into Norway and Denmark so easy, and which prepared the Dutch and the Belgians more readily to accept defeat. France proved no less susceptible to the insidious propaganda of the enemy and undermining by Fifth Columnists.



In the light of these grim facts we may well question the efficacy of our own propaganda. The Ministry of Information is one of the most criticised of our war organizations, and not without some justification. We sorely need a Northcliffe to inspire it and to give our propaganda the vitality which it had in the latter part of the last war. What has saved us in this realm are the admirable broadcasts of Mr. Churchill, the Prime Minister. His talks have that quality of sincerity, of indomitable purpose and of moral justification which make his words live in the minds of his hearers. It is not too much to say that his characteristic choice of words and phrases make a Churchillian broadcast a world event. But there is not enough simple repetition in our propaganda. The Germans call us the "war declarers," "war mongers" and such terms, suggesting that it is *we* who are the aggressors, and that *we* have willed this world catastrophe. This is dangerous to our cause. We should repeat to the world, *ad nauseam*, why we are at war with Germany: repeat the reasons simply and logically. The leaflets showered on Germany early in the War were too verbose, too argumentative, instead of being so simple that he who ran could read. Hitler's assurances should have been repeated in his own words and followed, without comment, by a bare statement of his actions to give him the lie. Pure fact rather than argument is best. It might well be worth dropping on Berlin a simple statement of the civilians killed and the damage done to London by the indiscriminate air attacks. This, without comment, would leave the Germans to draw their own conclusions—of retribution; of possible reprisals. This kind of propaganda is psychologically far more effective than creeds which contain controversial arguments and expressions of righteous indignation.

#### TOTAL WAR

The war of 1914-1918 showed the trend of all conflicts between Great Powers to become "total" wars. It showed that the factory worker was already as important in his way as the soldier, that civil morale was a significant factor, and that all the resources of man-power, finance and industry had to be mobilized to bring victory.

This war shows that principle working out to an even more intensive degree. In some way or another—in the fighting Services, in the civil defence Services, in the factories, in transport, in business, and commerce, in the hospitals, as Home Guards, as Observers—in myriad ways the people of this country and of the enemy countries are concerned closely in the war effort. Even the children are pawns in the grim game—evacuated to country areas, overseas, or subjected to the hazards of air attack—they must bear their part in the totalitarianism of this war.



The very thing which should have deterred the war-makers—this inevitable total character of modern war between great Powers—has instead been used by the aggressors for their own fell purpose. The regimentation of the German and Italian nations was started years ago for the deliberate purpose of preparation for war. This meant the oppression of free speech and opinion by the imposition of a harsh censorship, and the submission of the peoples to one unending stream of *ex parte* exhortation and prejudiced argument. They were "conditioned" into believing aggression to be necessary for their continued existence and to accepting "guns before butter."

How the results can ever be neutralized it is hard to say. Perhaps over-propaganda will ultimately defeat its own end and incredulity and disillusion will follow. Meanwhile, British propagandists should have the best advice of journalists, refugees from the enemy countries, and of psychologists (including advertising experts) in the preparation of material and in its presentation. Above all, the key propagandist must be Mr. Churchill.

#### WORLD WAR

World war is but a step from "total" war between great Powers. Politically the world is closely linked up. Even little Holland has significant possessions in the East Indies where precious oil is found. Belgium has her Belgian Congo where vegetable fats abound. So it is all the way through. The speed and range of modern war machines, necessitate a world-wide rather than a regional conception of strategy. The ramifications of the Great Powers create points of sensitiveness all over the globe. In this war, American reactions to the menace of the Dictators have been quicker than in the last. The tempo of warfare has speeded tremendously, the tempo of events keeps pace with the swifter war machine. Even the isolationists in the U.S.A. are beginning to appreciate the world-wide character of any modern war between Great Powers. In the next post-war settlement America will no longer be able to stand aside.

Already there are the signs of this conflict extending. The German drive towards the Balkans; the Italian *débâcle* in Africa; the Japanese invasion of China and Indo-China; the covetous eyes they are casting on the oil of the Dutch East Indies; the consequent threat to India, Singapore, and Australia—these are all examples of the trend of events. Total war eats up prodigious quantities of raw materials and supplies of all kinds. The treasure houses of the world have to be rifled to keep the war machine going. Thus total war, as it continues, must become a world war in one sense or another.

Then will be Britain's hour. Her far-flung Empire has given her experience in world strategy. She controls most of the key positions of the world, and with her Navy supreme she can face with calm confidence continental conceptions of strategy being tried out beyond the seas and oceans. When the War enters the world phase the various constituent self-governing countries of the Empire will play their most valuable part.

#### ENTRENCHMENTS AND FORTIFICATIONS

It has already been remarked that fortifications, however strong, were proved in the last war to be not invulnerable. This fact has been demonstrated again in this war by the melancholy experience of France and her Maginot Line, while the Finns found their impregnable Mannerheim Line was not the safe shield they fondly hoped it would be. Diplomatic action neutralized the Czech's fortifications in the Sudetes. It is clear, therefore, that reliance cannot be placed in the strong fixed position. Yet that is not to deny the value of good lines of fortifications as part of a greater defensive scheme employing depth and using mobile striking forces.

The disadvantage of fixed and highly fortified lines is that, once broken and outflanked, they immobilize their defenders. That is what happened in France. Defence in depth, flexible defence, is the reply and not merely a fortified fixed line, however strong. France would have done better to have spent that eighty million pounds not on her Maginot Line but upon first-class tank divisions, smaller fortified positions in great depth from her frontiers and in a strong defensive air force. Once the Sedan gap was made, French dispositions were upset and the Maginot Line mentality handicapped France from organizing improvised defence in depth. The "Line" complex made offensive action psychologically difficult. The French advances into the Saar in 1939 were clearly half-hearted and desultory. The ground gained then was immediately yielded when German pressure was applied. The war of movement, therefore, worked both psychologically and materially to the advantage of the Germans. Once the Maginot Line was outflanked, France had no substitute defence to offer: she had not learnt the lesson of the last war. We must be sure that we in this country have learned it.

One other point to make in this connexion is that since our military plans with France had been conceived on the basis of defence, the advance at the last hour into Belgium and Holland was the height of folly. The prepared lines might have held until depth defences had been established. The Belgian and Dutch appeal came too late for effective counter action in that field. Their countries became a trap—a fact which the epic of Dunkirk serves only more clearly to emphasize.

## WARSHIPS VERSUS LAND FORTIFICATIONS

It is perhaps untrue to say that naval action against land fortifications of commensurate character is wholly ineffective. But we can say that it is indecisive. Under certain special conditions it can be locally effective, as exemplified in the fleet's action against the Italian left flank in Northern Africa. In Norway, however, a direct naval attack on lightly held seaports with their strong land defences in the control of the enemy was considered to be too risky. Once these defences were manned by hostile personnel the opportunity of a frontal attack was gone and the hazarding of capital ships held not to be justified.

The naval action against Cherbourg was, however, a remarkable achievement of successful action. Here the invasion shipping presented a concentrated target suitable for engagement at long range by heavy naval units co-operating with bombing aircraft. The special circumstances and aims made such action justifiable and profitable. This may be an earnest of the "spoiling" tactics which the Navy is eminently well equipped to carry out. We find the same opportunity in the Mediterranean and some of the Italian bases in Italy may offer targets similar to Cherbourg.<sup>1</sup>

At the same time such actions against land positions are bound to be spasmodic in character and of a surprise nature. Sustained operations of this type are probably seldom possible but that does not detract from their value within a limited sphere of action.

## LOCALIZED FORCES

The speed of modern war movements calls for greater localization of emergency forces. There can be no time lag once the major blow is being delivered. The forces—land, sea and air—on the spot must be adequate to parry the first blows and to strike in reply. The Mediterranean in this war, especially since the defection of the French, is an example of this principle in action.

The organization of such localized forces is a matter of urgency from the point of view of Empire defence. They must be strong enough and self-reliant enough to prevent each separate area being dealt with piecemeal. "Divide and rule" is the precept upon which the Dictators act. Thus each strategical region must be sufficiently self-contained at least for the initial trial of strength.

It is clear that the defence of the Empire must be considered in three regions: first the Home area and the Atlantic—here American co-operation is already in being although still embryonic; secondly the

<sup>1</sup> This was written before the bombardment of Genoa on 9th February.  
—EDITOR.

Mediterranean; and thirdly the Indian and South Pacific Oceans. With the development of full co-operation by the United States in the Pacific and the Far East we shall have our ring of strongholds and self-contained defensive units set around the world. With adequate fleets, air forces and air bases, and armies of highly armoured and mechanized troops supplied from great stores of materials and munitions held at the various bases—where also adequate repair depots should be available—we shall be able to meet any challenge swiftly and keep the peace of the world.

Our strategy in this war is tending that way. Australia and New Zealand, with their constantly increasing military resources, are strongholds for the strategic defence of the Indian Ocean and South Pacific Group. The Canadian Empire Air Training Scheme is within the Home and Atlantic defence region, while acting also as a central reserve for all spheres of Empire Defence. Again, we have a traditional framework in being for the defence of our interests in the Mediterranean—Gibraltar, Malta, Cyprus, Alexandria linking to Aden and the Indian Ocean and South Pacific Group.

#### INFILTRATION IN ATTACK

Classic examples of the principle of infiltration effectively applied in attack have been seen in the present war during the Polish Campaign and in the battle of France. The German armoured columns moved as steel daggers through the "lines" of the Poles and French. Sharp claws crept round the rear of the broken-up sections of the fronts and disrupted communications, causing confusion and panic.

These attacks were remarkable for their effrontery and dash. Risks were freely taken and they came off because no suitable counter measures were improvised by the defenders who were still thinking in terms of "lines," of infantry battles and of fortifications in length instead of depth. Thus the Panzer Divisions of the Germans were able to deploy fanwise behind the main Polish and French positions, and in France were successful in out-flanking the magnificent but static Maginot Line, cutting its communications and leaving it in the air.

This is an unorthodox principle in tactics and one we must take very seriously. There must be a counter to it and, as has been said, that probably consists of defence arranged in depth; with it must go the development of "unit" resistance without too much dependence upon headquarters; in effect, a return to the "soldier's battle." This implies the evolution of "tank destroyers" and tank-destroying units; the use of subtle methods of defence; the protection of troops from dive bombing by the extensive use of sets of slit trenches, the occupation



of which is constantly changed ; the working out of methods of tank counter-infiltration to snap the enemy's slender and sketchy communications ; the bombing of his columns and especially his petrol supplies ; and, in general, an enterprising attitude to this warfare of movement. With local parity in the air and local parity in "destroyer tanks" and anti-tank devices, success is well within the grasp of a resolute army. Here, more than anywhere, the soldier must fight without thought of his flanks, of retiring or of defeat. The "claws" of infiltration may be very slender ; they can be snapped by the enterprise of defending troops. The counter to infiltration, granted minimum requirements in mechanized and armoured vehicles and of fighter aircraft, is, to use a vulgar expression, "guts and cheek." The intrepidity of the attacker can, in such cases, lead to his undoing.

#### DIPLOMACY

Our diplomatic record in this war appears on the surface not to be too good. We have the disadvantage of moral and ethical considerations when we compete with the enemy's diplomacy. He gives away freely things which are not his to give. In a predatory world of power politics this is, initially at any rate, a great disadvantage under which an honest broker has to labour. In the long and arduous run, however, British honesty may yet prove the best policy.

The Russian pact with Germany is the clearest example. Had British diplomats been prepared to recognize and condone Russia's aspirations in the Baltic States and Finland, her support for the Allies could probably have been obtained. We were handicapped by our scruples and by our reverence for the sovereignty of small independent states, and this in a situation of extreme gravity.

Our relations with Japan are in a similar category. If we would have recognised her need for expansion, it might have been canalized into less objectionable channels. Italy, too, without her outlet for surplus population in America, had a similar problem. There was no timely realization of the need for some accommodation to be afforded to these growing Powers.

The Ottawa Agreements to a large extent closed the British Empire to outsiders in economic matters. One result was the search for empires of their own by the dissatisfied and dispossessed Powers. The cry arose for "living space" and for places in the sun.

The League of Nations proved in practice to have insufficient prestige to make the great world adaptations and revisions which were obviously necessary. The League was a league of some nations and not of all. It represented too much the views of the victorious allied and associated



Powers of the war of 1914-1918. French diplomacy, in particular, regarded it too much as an instrument to maintain the post-war status rather than an organic living institution constantly re-shaping the world to its ever-changing needs. The refusal of the United States to enter the League meant in the end its neutralization and descent into ineffectiveness. British loyalty to the Covenant handicapped British diplomacy in a situation of realities. France was interested more in France than in a world society. The League moved then in the second decade of its existence in an unreal atmosphere. We tried to make it work, but the realities of support for it were not there. British public opinion ardently wanted it—the League—to work; but, while a whole-hearted League policy might have succeeded, half-and-half measures were bound to fail. Thus the attempt to apply sanctions on Italy in the Abyssinian affair alienated that country and drove her into the arms of Germany. Unfortunately we were insufficiently armed to meet with force the Italian challenge to the League. Had we been well armed enough then, a war fought for League principles would no doubt have succeeded and a new era of international collective security begun in the world.

With our unilateral disarmament, coupled with a too facile belief in "collective security," our diplomatists were left with neither arms to fight when fighting was necessary nor the ability to assume in diplomatic action a realist attitude to world problems.

What of the future of our diplomacy? One first-class success in this war and our diplomats can make hay of the intrigues of the enemy. The fiction of German invincibility is behind the success of her clumsy diplomats. The frightened neutrals rationalize their fears and their kow-towing to the Germans by so-called diplomatic agreements. But behind it all is an intense hatred of the bully whose spittle they now have to lick.

### CONCLUSION

The urgent need is a substantial military success for British and allied arms. The destruction of the Italian navy or the complete defeat of Graziani in North Africa would be such a first-class success. We want no more brilliant strategic withdrawals, no more Dakar fiascos. The stand of Britain against the threat of invasion has strengthened American confidence in our ability to meet the German menace, and with resolution and some modicum of luck we should be able to gain new friends in action and not merely in thought. In fact, the outstanding lesson of the last war which applies to this, as to all wars, is that "nothing succeeds like success."

## THE TACTICS OF THE BLITZKRIEG

By MAJOR M. P. HUTHWAITE, The Loyal Regiment (North Lancashire).

**F**OR a considerable period before the War Germany had expressed her intention of using *blitzkrieg* tactics. In Britain and elsewhere writers whose military knowledge was not very great seized on this most expressive word and used it either humorously or else with awe. The *blitzkrieg* was referred to as if its tactical and strategical setting was entirely different from that of ordinary warfare, almost in fact as if it was a new weapon invented by Germany and one which could only be successfully used by her. *Blitzkrieg* actually means "lightning war" and therefore the tacit assumption was that only Germany was presumptuous enough, or skilled enough, to try to wage war with such vigour as to achieve quick victory. Even now we are inclined to say that Germany uses *blitzkrieg* tactics, with the instinctive feeling that they are somehow different from ours. This, of course, is not the case. The only way in which *blitzkrieg* tactics differ from others is that they are arrived at, first by considering the principles of war and deciding to lay less stress on security than on the other principles—this is a logical thing to do, for security is a hampering principle and, if too much weight is given to it, it must act as a drag on the remaining ones; secondly, they are achieved by suitable organization and training and by instilling the *blitzkrieg* idea into all ranks of the army.

Perhaps the Germans themselves put the matter into its right perspective as well as anyone could do. Here is an extract from a semi-official German publication: "The use of the word *blitzkrieg* has led people to imagine that it denotes a departure from recognised tactical principles, whereas it is in fact only an application of two principles recognised in every country:—

(a) It is the task of all arms to allow the infantry to close with the enemy while still possessing the means to force a decision.

(b) All arms must contribute to relentless pursuit once the enemy's resistance has been broken.

Infantry is still the principal arm. The fact that tanks and the air force were employed so successfully in the present war that the infantry encountered little resistance does not detract from the importance of infantry who must still break down the final enemy opposition with its own resources. However exhausted the attackers may be the pursuit must be close. Although armoured fighting vehicles, aircraft,

and mobile troops can help to turn tactical into strategical success, infantry has its role, and must push forward without regard to possible loss of touch on the flanks, the object being to prevent the enemy re-establishing themselves in position. In such action subordinate commanders, often left to their own resources, must act boldly and be ready to accept responsibility."

So much for the tactical principles of the *blitzkrieg*. It is now clear that there is nothing unusual about them. They are the same principles which guide us in our tactics. But the quotation hardly goes far enough, for it does not consider *how* the infantry should achieve their task of closing with the enemy.

There are two methods. *First* what we might term the linear advance. This is the secure way, for it visualizes a steady advance on the whole front with all units keeping in touch with those on their flanks and the avoidance of anything in the nature of salients or re-entrants in the line. In its way it is sound, but it is bound to be slow and probably costly for it implies the use of unsuitable as well as suitable ground and entails the direct forcing of enemy strong points instead of their envelopment. *Secondly* we have the infiltration method as practised by Germany. In this case the advance is made only over suitable ground, and the object is to penetrate on narrow fronts as opportunity offers. As the attacking troops do not have to keep in touch with those on their flanks they can push on to unlimited objectives. Command is decentralized, as it obviously must be. Great stress is laid on communications from front to rear, not to ensure orders getting forward but to ensure information getting back, so that the commander can use his reserves to exploit success. Both these tactical methods are known to and understood by the British Army, so we can assert quite finally that German tactics are fundamentally the same as ours.

Though the *blitzkrieg* as a myth is now exploded we must still acknowledge our admiration for its effectiveness. It gives a practically realist basis on which to wage war, for instead of the slow cautious strategy of attrition which is liable to bring economic ruin and misery to victor and vanquished alike it shows us the way to the swift decision, the supreme effort in which the valour and even recklessness of comparatively few will mean ultimate safety and peace to many. One day the armies of the Empire will assuredly meet the armies of the enemy on the field of battle. At the moment we are supremely confident of one thing, that man to man the British and Imperial soldier is superior to the German. At the same time we realise that we labour under two temporary disadvantages—shortage of equipment and lack of training, though we are speedily rectifying both. Once the German army laboured under both these

difficulties, for prior to the rise of Hitler it was limited in size and composition by the conditions of Versailles. When its opportunity came, in the shape of the favour of the Nazi party and the nation, it took it with both hands. Out of the small army grew the mighty one which exists to-day—an army organized to meet the calls of modern warfare and imbued with a spirit of offensiveness and the belief that it could not be conquered if only it put its all into every operation which it should be called upon to undertake.

The Army of the Empire is in a very similar state. It will be given the equipment that it demands and the men that it demands. Let us therefore determine to beat the German at his own game—as the R.A.F. has done—and in the day that we meet him in the field carry out such a *blitzkrieg* that the German effort wilts away before us. But this is merely enthusiasm. It is all very well to hope ahead but we must come down to the hard facts of training, organization and preparation which makes a *blitzkrieg* possible.

Let us then consider those factors which have enabled the Germans to achieve it, for from them we may learn lessons of value to ourselves. There is nothing defeatist in such a study for the German army is to-day probably the best in the world. If we can catch up on the lead which they have gained and become even equal in efficiency and technique we can rely on the individual spirit of our troops to give us the superiority in battle. For purposes of discussion we can consider the factors which have made *blitzkrieg* tactics possible to the Germans under the headings of :—

- (a) Organization.
- (b) Training.
- (c) Physical fitness.
- (d) Command and control.
- (e) Air support.
- (f) Discipline and spirit.

Let us consider each in turn.

#### ORGANIZATION

Speed is an important ingredient in the *blitzkrieg* formula. Once battle is joined the enemy must be hammered relentlessly and given not a moment's respite. It is therefore essential that supporting arms should be able to come into action very quickly when they are required. The German unit organization facilitates this quick support, for the Regiment—which is the nearest equivalent to our Brigade—possesses six 2.95 in. guns and two 5.9 in. guns, while the battalion has twelve machine guns



(or dual purpose light-machine guns on heavy mountings), six 3.16 in. mortars and forty-eight machine pistols in addition to the anti-tank guns, anti-tank rifles, light machine guns, and 2 in. mortars which are common to both armies. A chart showing the organization of a German Regiment is shown as an Appendix. It is fairly clear that as they have artillery and machine guns as an integral part of the Regiment it is easier for the Germans to get quick support than it is for us.

What we have got to do, however, is to concentrate on getting perfect co-operation and understanding between infantry and gunners so that our divisional artillery can give support very quickly. It is suggested that we should be very chary about becoming too imbued with the barrage system of support. Barrages take some time to arrange and are very expensive in ammunition—both great drawbacks if our attack is to be on the *blitzkrieg* principle; firstly because we cannot wait for the artillery to make lengthy preparations; secondly because, if we achieve the success which we hope for, our advance will be too rapid for the building up of large ammunition reserves in the forward area. Moreover, if the artillery programme is worked out before the attack starts, on a time basis, it is not really satisfactory because, if we cater for startling success and do not achieve it, the artillery fire will run ahead of the infantry and not give it full support; if we cater for only moderate success and gain more than we expect we shall be hampered in our exploitation. Therefore we should surely decide that our artillery, during mobile warfare, should normally be used for concentrations. As we have said before we need very close liaison between infantry and artillery; the gunner must be able to see through the infantryman's eyes so that he can foresee the tasks which he will be called upon to do; the infantryman must be quite clear as to the capabilities of the artillery so that he does not demand the impossible. We must cut "procedure" to a minimum and strive continually to lessen the time which it will take for fire to be brought to bear on the points or areas required.

#### TRAINING

The German is by nature meticulous in his attention to detail, and very thorough. Both these characteristics can be seen in his methods of training for war. When he trains he really gets down to it; he is satisfied with nothing but perfection and even while this article is being written he is still training at full pressure, although he might reasonably be expected to rest on the experience already gained in actual warfare. In the British Army we try to do the same, but we do not always find it so easy. We seem to have difficulty in finding time for the task of training the individual junior N.C.O. and private soldier. It was noticeable in



the campaign in the Low Countries and France how proficient the individual German soldier was at his task ; the Lance-Corporal in charge of a mortar had always reconnoitred and prepared a fresh position to which he moved when he was spotted ; the Corporal in charge of a section required to mop up an anti-tank gun carried out his out-flanking movement without hesitation and almost as a drill.

Our armies are new and much minor tactical, and even individual, training is still needed. Are we getting a clear run at it ? Some think we are not and trace the trouble to over insistence on administrative detail. In the German army the operational staff have much more control over " A " and " Q " and the Services than in ours, and rigidly suppress administration which seems to them unnecessary and likely to waste the time of officers of combatant units, for a well trained man or a well trained unit is a measure of the time which has been spent in instruction. Such a viewpoint is easier of course in Germany than in Great Britain for in this country a great deal of administration is fundamentally caused by the demands of finance. That is representative of democracy and cannot be helped, but it is felt that the administrative work which at present devolves on units could be considerably lessened.

It must be remembered that nearly every letter which sets forth from the War Office, G.H.Q., or Command, finally arrives on the table of an officer commanding a fighting unit till he and his Adjutant are weighed down to their desks by a mass of correspondence. A considerable proportion goes even further, to the company where the commander and possibly his Company Sergeant-Major have to waste precious hours in dealing with it. If we are to have an army which is trained to the last degree of perfection we must give the officers concerned a chance to do it. We must curb our enthusiasm for administrative organization and ruthlessly cut out anything which is not vitally necessary. It is for " operations " to take the lead. It is their duty to see that the Army is trained to fight and they must try and act as a buffer between units and the well-meaning but misplaced and almost dangerous enthusiasm of those branches of the staff and services whose pleasure it is to see a well ordered and highly organized life on peace-time lines.

#### PHYSICAL FITNESS

If we wish to indulge in a little wishful thinking we can say that German manhood is physically poor, that lack of balanced feeding and over insistence on physical training in the Hitler Youth is producing a nation of poor stamina. That may be true, but only as a very long term policy—longer than we believe the War will last. What is also true is that German infantry divisions marched from 20 to 25 miles a day several

days on end in the Low Countries and were in good fighting condition at the end of it. Let us emulate the German army views on physical fitness, where it is a matter of pride and principle for officers to set the men the example of restriction in smoking and drinking and of regular active exercise, including such pastimes as swimming rivers in service kit. The writer knows of one brigade in the British Army where it is a matter of principle that no-one shall smoke before tea time, and of a Corps H.Q. where everyone covers a cross-country course each week (Majors aged 40 or more and senior officers, including the Corps Commander, walk it, the rest run).

These ideas are excellent. Let us not only order a marching distance to be covered, but inspire the Army with the desire to keep itself at a high physical standard until we reach the stage when he who does not try to attain such a standard is regarded by his fellows as one who is rather letting the Army down. It is believed that if all officers were asked to set such an example they would willingly do so, and the men would follow it.

#### COMMAND AND CONTROL

We have already discussed the way in which Germany decentralizes the control of supporting arms and pays great attention to the training of the individual down to the junior N.C.O. and the private soldier. As might be expected under such circumstances, command and control are also decentralized on the principle that the man on the spot can far more easily judge what action should be taken, and must be prepared to exercise his judgment and use his initiative. Very great stress is laid on the need for initiative by even the most junior commanders. *Truppenfuehrung*—the equivalent of our Field Service Regulations, states “mistakes and even disobedience are better than inertia,” and again “better a faulty plan which shows boldness and decision than a perfect plan enmeshed in uncertainty.”

The call to the commander is therefore clear ; he is to make his decision and then act on it with the utmost energy ; he must not be afraid of making the decision for, in a *blitzkrieg*, precious time cannot be wasted by reference to a more senior officer. Such an outlook has many practical advantages. A German operation order consists largely of the intention ; the method is left very much to the officers carrying out the operation.

This system is surely a sound one. The issue of a detailed operation order with a complicated method paragraph is excellent if the enemy does not upset the plan, but unfortunately he usually does and the situation is then immensely complicated for the junior commander. Is he to continue to stick rigidly to the dictates of the operation order, or is he to do

what seems best to him under the circumstances? If he takes the latter course he may upset the plan further. If he takes the former the operation is likely to be a failure. Let us, for a change, quote a British semi-official report on the subject:—"The essence of German leadership is that the commander must always be well forward in order to appreciate the situation and to make his plan before giving verbal orders to subordinate commanders. During active operations units below divisions do not issue written orders and more often than not corps and divisional commanders issue verbal orders. It is interesting to note that there is little evidence of orders written for war diary purposes or in order to fix ultimate responsibility for success or failure. When orders are given verbally, time is saved by framing them in simple and concise statements. Subordinate commanders on receipt of orders show that they have grasped their meaning by repeating them back using the first person. This practice is perfected during training. The commander appreciates and makes his plan, verbal orders are issued and repeated by recipients, who then return to their units. The whole procedure is completed in a very few minutes."

The matter can then be summed up by saying that in the German army the subordinate commander is encouraged to assume responsibility and relied on to achieve results; in fact command is decentralized. This is not so much the case in our Army. We are inclined to centralize, to "put it in writing" so as to be able to allot the blame if anything goes wrong, to tell subordinates not only to do a certain thing but how to do it. The two systems are a product of their political systems—democracy and dictatorship; but the British Army is not concerned with politics.

If we are going to *blitzkrieg* the Germans ought we not to revise our views on the centralization of command, and the control exercised by our system of issuing orders?

#### AIR SUPPORT

When the writer of this article was at the Staff College he was taught that the role of the Air Force in support of the Army was to "isolate the battlefield." The phrase sounds well and is sound if the battlefield is isolated not only from the enemy ground troops and reserves but also from his air force. The dive-bomber support accorded to the German army was highly successful; the use of it on the actual field of battle was a sign of good observance of the principles of maintenance of the objective, co-operation, and concentration of force at the right time and the right place. The *blitzkrieg* is a struggle for a quick decision, and if the *blitzkrieg* is successful the long term policy of isolating the battlefield can produce no effective result.

When our armies meet the German armies in the field, it will inevitably be the major operation of the War, for the German army is the strength of Germany. Therefore when that time comes, presumably the R.A.F. will give to the Army its fullest support and be used according to the wishes of the military commander, probably on the actual field of battle. If this is to be, as we sincerely hope it is, it is suggested that the fact should be announced at once so that during its period of training the Army can practise the close co-operation with the R.A.F. which will be a big factor in achieving our ultimate victory. It is rather doubtful whether, at the moment, the Army gives sufficient study to the question of air co-operation, yet it is a large subject and needs careful consideration. Army commanders and their staffs will be required to select priority targets for our heavy bomber aircraft; officers with units must be able to appreciate the capabilities of, and direct from the ground the activities of the dive-bombers. At the moment we think chiefly of passive air defence. We require a basis on which to study active air attack.<sup>1</sup>

#### DISCIPLINE, SPIRIT AND MORALE

The evacuation of the B.E.F. from Dunkirk was a marvellous achievement. What was more marvellous was the amount of equipment (light machine guns, mortars, etc.) which some units brought away with them. We are bound to say *some*, for the good order or otherwise with which units retired varied considerably. This is not a criticism, for all did splendidly, but while some had behind them the steadying influences of the discipline acquired in peace, others were newly formed and had not the opportunity to acquire the same standard. But now we are training and we should realize that we must seize our opportunity to insist on the absorption of that ingrained discipline which distinguishes an army from a rabble. It is not always easy. Although a most well behaved nation we like to feel that we are very independent and we possess a free Press which is not averse in the case of one or two newspapers to raising its sales by the printing of sensational stories about the "unnecessarily" strict discipline, unsympathetic "brass hats," etc., which though crude, in poor taste, and often openly libellous, are liable to prove embarrassing. Yet we all know at the back of our minds that discipline in an army is an essential to victory. We know, too, that we are facing a highly disciplined army which is part of a disciplined nation. Therefore we ourselves need to achieve a high standard. The task is not really difficult because the British soldier is fundamentally sensible and honest. We need do only three things. First, ensure that the officers set the soldier the standard that the whole Army should achieve. Secondly, explain to the soldier

<sup>1</sup> Recent announcements show that this is being done.—EDITOR.

the reason for and the value of discipline. Thridly, do all we can to keep alive in him the ideal of following a leader. The German army have their *Führer*, and their admiration of him is no superficial thing but deeply engraved in their hearts. We have The King and we must try and put aside our native shyness and instil in the troops a fervour to serve, and an attitude altogether different from the flippant sensationalism or lush sentimentality with which the less reputable, but unhappily widely read, portion of our Press deal with the matter of leadership.

A British liaison officer who remained with a French army until the disintegration had begun asked a French staff officer what the meaning of it all was and why the splendid French army was crumbling away in such a fashion. The Frenchman made a wry face. "We have no leader," he said, "You cannot inspire men to follow a little soldier politician." The anecdote is significant.

#### CONCLUSION

We have considered in detail the ingredients necessary for the waging of a *blitzkrieg*. If we seem to have evinced some admiration for the German army it is excusable, for they have shown their efficiency, not once but several times, and it is not the role of a soldier to indulge in petty jealousy or to turn a blind eye to facts. It is now for us to decide whether or not, when our time comes, we can wage a *blitzkrieg* and by the measured fury of our attack bring the War to a speedily successful conclusion. If we think we can we should all, down to the latest joined recruit, know that that is our object. We should all realize that we can only achieve this object by—

- (a) Improving the co-operation between arms, and if necessary re-casting our organization.
- (b) Increasing the *tempo* of our training.
- (c) Freeing ourselves from the hampering cords of excessive administration.
- (d) Improving our physical fitness.
- (e) Encouraging initiative in junior leaders, thinking less about correct procedure and more about ultimate results.
- (f) Obtaining a clear statement of policy regarding the extent and form of air support which we shall receive.
- (g) Improving discipline.

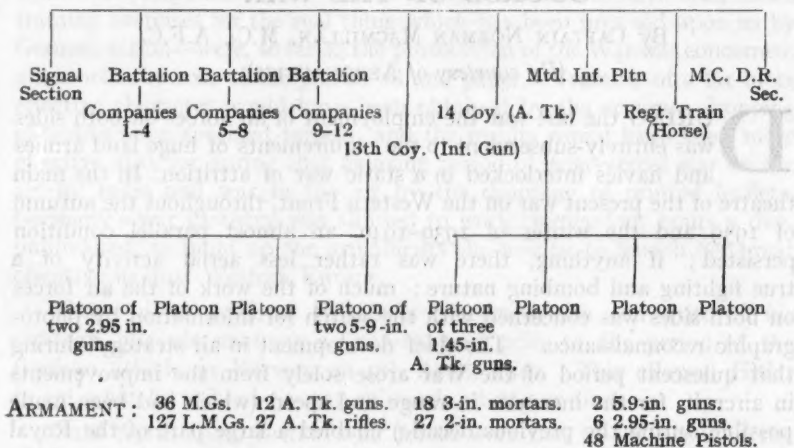
Finally, the writer would apologize if he appears to have remarked too often that such a thing "should" be done. It is easy to theorize on a subject, it is difficult to put theories into practice. Let the excuse be the realization that we are fighting for our very existence. The *Reich* is powerful, her morale good, her army strong, and her *Führer*



able. We shall not achieve victory if we indulge in complacent self satisfaction and wishful thinking or if we dwell too much on our comfort. We must be willing, even eager, to criticize ourselves and discover our weak points, and then by our endeavours turn them into strong ones.

## APPENDIX

## ORGANIZATION OF THE GERMAN INFANTRY REGIMENT



## THE INFLUENCE OF AIR FORCES ON THE COURSE OF THE WAR<sup>1</sup>

By CAPTAIN NORMAN MACMILLAN, M.C., A.F.C.

(By courtesy of *AERONAUTICS*)

**D**URING the last war the employment of air forces on both sides was entirely subservient to the requirements of huge land armies and navies interlocked in a static war of attrition. In the main theatre of the present war on the Western Front, throughout the autumn of 1939 and the winter of 1939-1940, an almost parallel condition persisted; if anything, there was rather less aerial activity of a true fighting and bombing nature; much of the work of the air forces on both sides was concerned with the search for information by photographic reconnaissance. The chief development in air strategy<sup>2</sup> during that quiescent period of the War arose solely from the improvements in aircraft, for the increases in range and speed (which had been made possible during the previous decade) enabled a large part of the Royal Air Force to be based at home and yet serve as an integral part of the fighting units ranged against Germany. Compared to the number of squadrons which served in France in the years 1916-1918 few served in France in 1939-1940. The retention of so many squadrons of the Royal Air Force in the United Kingdom played a most useful part during the evacuation of the British forces from Belgium and France during the critical days between 28th May, 1940, when Belgium laid down her arms, and 21st June, when France capitulated to Germany. For the Royal Air Force squadrons based in the United Kingdom were better placed to assist the evacuation from Dunkirk than were the squadrons in France, which were under the necessity to prepare for their own evacuation while the operation for the Army was in progress.

The retention of a large part of the Royal Air Force in the United Kingdom from the beginning of the War conformed to the elemental strategical requirement of a secure base from which to operate aircraft.

<sup>1</sup> This article is abridged from that published under the title "Air Strategy in the First Year of the War," which appeared in *Aeronautics* for November, 1940. It is reproduced by courtesy of the Editor of that periodical and the author.

<sup>2</sup> The author uses the term "air strategy" to mean the strategical use of aircraft. As air forces are essentially employed against land or sea objectives, it has always been questionable whether that term in its literal sense has any real meaning.—EDITOR.

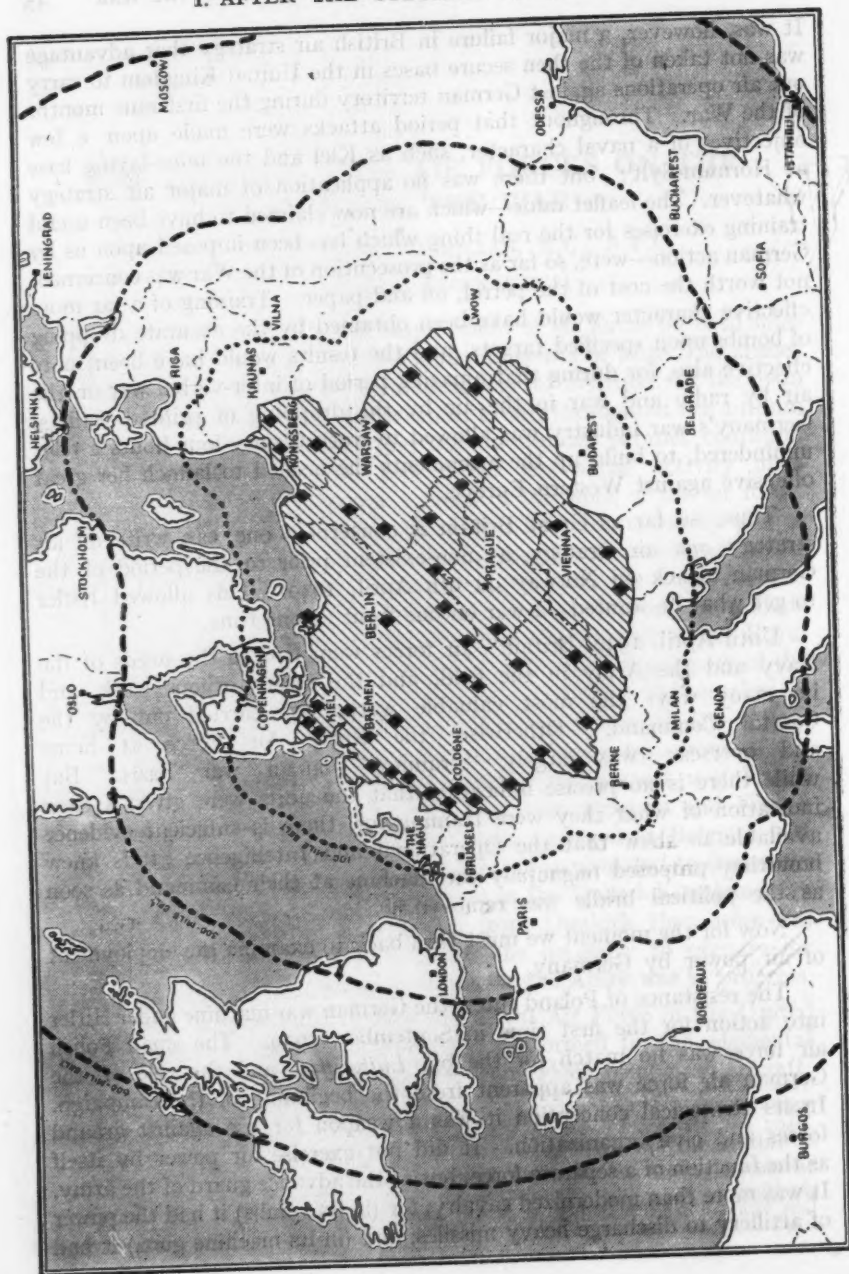
It was, however, a major failure in British air strategy that advantage was not taken of the then secure bases in the United Kingdom to carry out air operations against German territory during the first nine months of the War. Throughout that period attacks were made upon a few objectives of a naval character, such as Kiel and the mine-laying base at Hornum-Sylt; but there was no application of major air strategy whatever. The leaflet raids—which are now claimed to have been useful training exercises for the real thing which has been imposed upon us by German action—were, so far as the prosecution of the War was concerned, not worth the cost of the petrol, oil and paper. Training of a far more effective character would have been obtained by the accurate dropping of bombs upon specified targets, and the results would have been more effective also, for during that amazing period of inter-verbal war on the air by radio and war in the air by the dropping of printed leaflets, Germany's war industry was allowed to work twenty-four hours a day, unhindered, to build up the armaments she needed to launch her great offensive against Western Europe.

Thus, so far as Great Britain is concerned, one can write off air strategy, *qua* air strategy, as non-existent prior to the period of the German attack on Norway on 9th April, 1940. This allowed Hitler to get what he wanted—a war on one front at one time.

Until April, 1940, Britain's air forces were tied to the needs of the Navy and the Army in the field, and the most arduous work, and in many ways the most valuable work, was carried out by the Coastal Command. Otherwise, the Royal Air Force at home and overseas was largely "training" on a war basis. But while there is no precise indication that the units were given a clear indication of what they were training for, there is sufficient evidence available to show that the Operational and Intelligence Staffs knew how they proposed to employ the machine at their command as soon as the political bridle was removed.

Now for the moment we must turn back to examine the employment of air power by Germany.

The resistance of Poland threw the German war machine under Hitler into action for the first time in September, 1939. The small Polish air force was no match for the big *Luftwaffe*; and the role of the German air force was apparent from the beginning of the campaign. In its strategical conception it was a weapon for use against ground forces and civil organization. It did not exercise air power by itself as the function of a separate force, but as the advance guard of the army. It was more than modernized cavalry, for (in its bombs) it had the power of artillery to discharge heavy missiles, and (in its machine guns) it had



the property of the infantry of concentrating a heavy volume of small-arms fire. The use of the German air force against Poland was purely a tactical function of the army. There was no evidence that the German High Command regarded the *Luftwaffe* as a strategic weapon in itself.

Assisted by a number of favourable factors—the geographical positions of East Prussia and the “island” of Danzig, the German army with the air force at its van struck hard blows at the Polish army. The three-sided attack was favourable to the Germans and unfavourable to the Poles. The value of the hilly frontier of the western side of the Polish corridor, which ought to have provided a good line for defence, was nullified by the Nazi possession of Danzig and by the relatively open plain which stretches all the way from Berlin to Warsaw, and from the frontier of East Prussia to Warsaw. The geographical lay-out of Western Poland made an ideal campaigning country for the German plan of air plus mechanized ground attack, especially in September when the terrestrial conditions are favourable for the movement of mechanized forces.

The collapse of Poland within a month was completed by the Russians walking in from the East.

It is obvious (in retrospect) that the German High Command was encouraged by its swift success in Poland to consolidate its plans for the later attacks which were to follow in the Low Countries and France, where a similar general scheme of attack was carried out against Belgium and France.

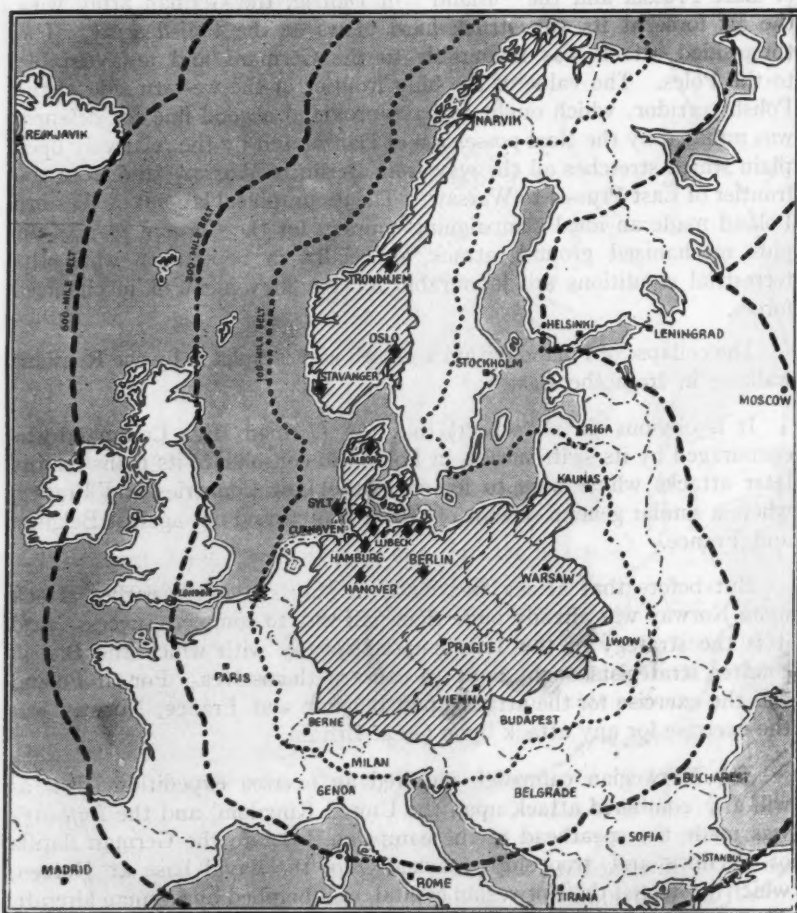
But before that attack was made in May, 1940, the earlier attack upon Norway was already more than half way to complete success. And it is the strategy of the attack upon Norway with which the British counter strategists ought most to concern themselves. For, if Poland was the exercise for the attack upon Belgium and France, Norway was the exercise for any attack upon Great Britain.

The Norwegian campaign required an oversea expedition (just as will any combined attack upon the United Kingdom) and the *Luftwaffe* was made the spearhead of the campaign. Before the German flotilla of warships and troopships reached Oslo, the naval base at Horten, which protected the Norwegian capital, was bombed by German aircraft. The streets of Oslo were swept by machine-gun fire from the air. Simultaneously with the occupation of most of the ports of Norway by German warships and troopships disguised as innocent merchantmen, enemy aeroplanes swooped down upon the airports at Kjeller, Fornebu (Oslo), Stavanger and Vaernes (Trondhjem). Seaplanes landed at Oslo



Stavanger and many other points along the coast. These aircraft fulfilled a dual purpose. They carried troops to reinforce the original landing forces, and they occupied the aerodromes and held them as air bases for the expeditionary force.

## II. AFTER THE COLLAPSE OF NORWAY AND DENMARK



The Danish aerodromes at Rye and Aalborg provided the German forces with intermediate aerodromes where short-range aircraft could be refuelled when they were carrying heavy loads, and whence bombing raids could be carried out against the more distant points in Norwegian

territory pending the consolidation of the grounds captured in Norway. At points where aircraft could not land to disgorge reinforcements parachute troops were dropped, and supplies were delivered to detached forces by the same means. At one time after the British Navy had secured control of the Fjord there was no other way for the Germans to reinforce and maintain their troops in the Narvik area.

With the short ranges of flight open to the German air force and the long ranges which were thrust upon the Royal Air Force operating from bases in the United Kingdom, the balance of air power was too unequal for equilibrium on the ground to be maintained, and the withdrawal of the British forces from Norway was undoubtedly brought about by the strategic use of the air weapon by the German High Command.

This illustrates one important feature of air strategy, which is that the possession of close range air bases from which to strike is equivalent to an accession of striking strength ; for several reasons :—

- (i) More armament load can be carried because less fuel is required.
- (ii) More journeys can be made in a given time.
- (iii) There is less wear and tear on the personnel of the crews.
- (iv) The element of surprise may be more effectively employed.
- (v) Fighter escorts can be provided for the bombers if circumstances demand such escorts.
- (vi) Troop reinforcements (by the comparatively small transportation capacity of aircraft) can be speeded up, and parachute supplies delivered at a greater rate.
- (vii) Advanced troops do not feel they are so cut off from their base and therefore are possessed of a moral support which is of incalculable value in a tight corner.

All these advantages were seized for the German expeditionary force against Norway by the prompt intervention of the *Luftwaffe*.

But in order to obtain the maximum advantage from the possession of advanced air bases from which to strike it is necessary to possess also a series of intermediate air bases sited at close intervals from the central source of supply in a series of chains which lead to the striking points. The swiftness with which Germany overran Denmark and South Norway gave her these precise conditions. Her possession of them was accelerated by the immediate and abject capitulation of Denmark, whose failure to hold up the advance of the German troops helped the invasion of Norway to success.

It is not too much to say that without the air weapon Germany could not have conquered Norway. The rapid success of her arms in Norway was achieved because the High Command based the plan of invasion upon the striking and reinforcing power of the air. By no other conception of the campaign could they have dared to land troops at Narvik simultaneously with the attack upon Oslo; for Narvik lay miles from the nearest available safe German seaport: its reinforcement by sea against the sea power of the British Navy was unthinkable. It was a different matter to seize it by surprise attack from ships. But only the initial attack by sea could be relied upon. Thereafter the air force would have to maintain the force in Narvik, for it would be cut off both by sea and land from the main German forces farther South.

This employment of the air weapon was successful because the Allies were unprepared for it; indeed, in Germany, supreme command of all forces has at times been given to the General commanding the air forces concerned in an action, presumably because strategic use of the whole force has depended upon the air situation. Britain has not yet learned this lesson.

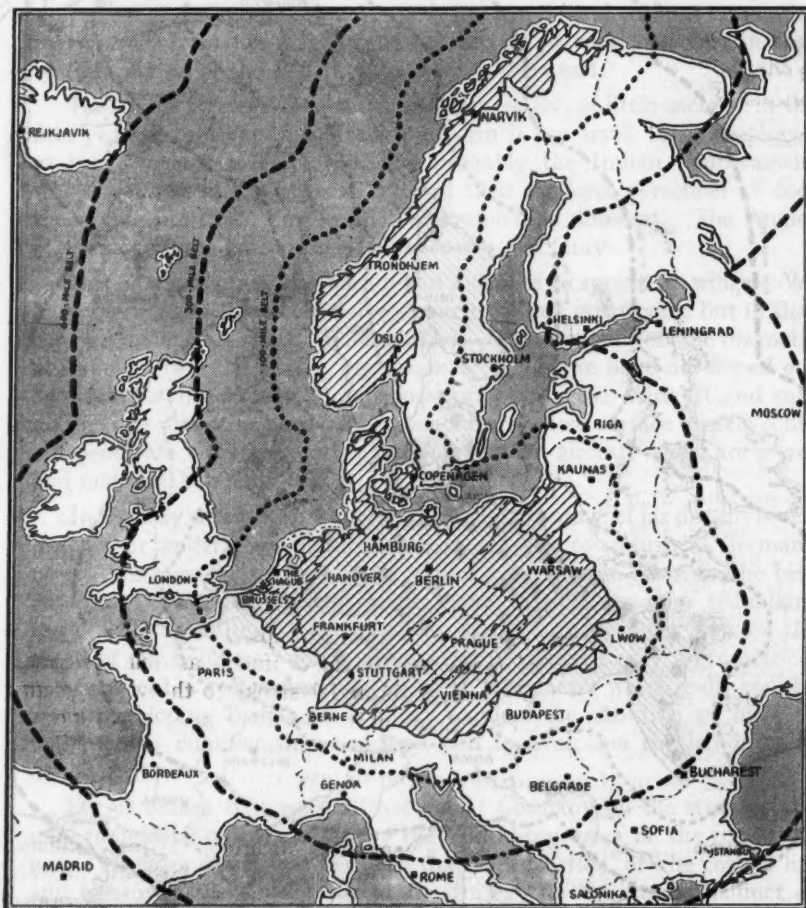
#### THE SUBJECTION OF HOLLAND

The strategic use of the *Luftwaffe* against Holland felled that country in four bloody days from roth May, when the attack was launched, to 14th May, when the country capitulated. Like locusts German aircraft descended upon the beaches and aerodromes where parachute troops had rushed the defences and prepared the way. Thousands of troops were poured into Holland over the heads of the defences by transport aircraft. There was no front line. The battle raged everywhere at once, with British bombers adding to the din and perhaps, owing to the Dutch refusal to have staff talks in advance, to the confusion as well. German strategy relied upon the speed of its aerial stroke to throw the enemy into confusion, and on the saboteurs of its parachute corps to break down the system of communications and to spread false news while in Holland, as in Norway, fifth columnists assisted the downfall of the country.

In France, during the retreat, a young boy sometimes ran into a village, all breathless, and told the people in their own accent that the Boche were coming and they must get away quickly, at once. Refugees streamed out of the village and thronged the roads, cluttering them with their poor belongings bundled rapidly on to any movable thing. One tale I came across was that of an old, half-crippled grandmother being pushed to hoped-for safety by her grand-daughter on a tea-trolley. When the retiring troops came in the village was deserted, but the roads in front

were crowded with refugees to delay their further progress. Meanwhile the boy had run back and jumped into the same German aeroplane that had brought him over and flew back across the lines to his German comrades.

### III. AFTER THE COLLAPSE OF THE LOW COUNTRIES

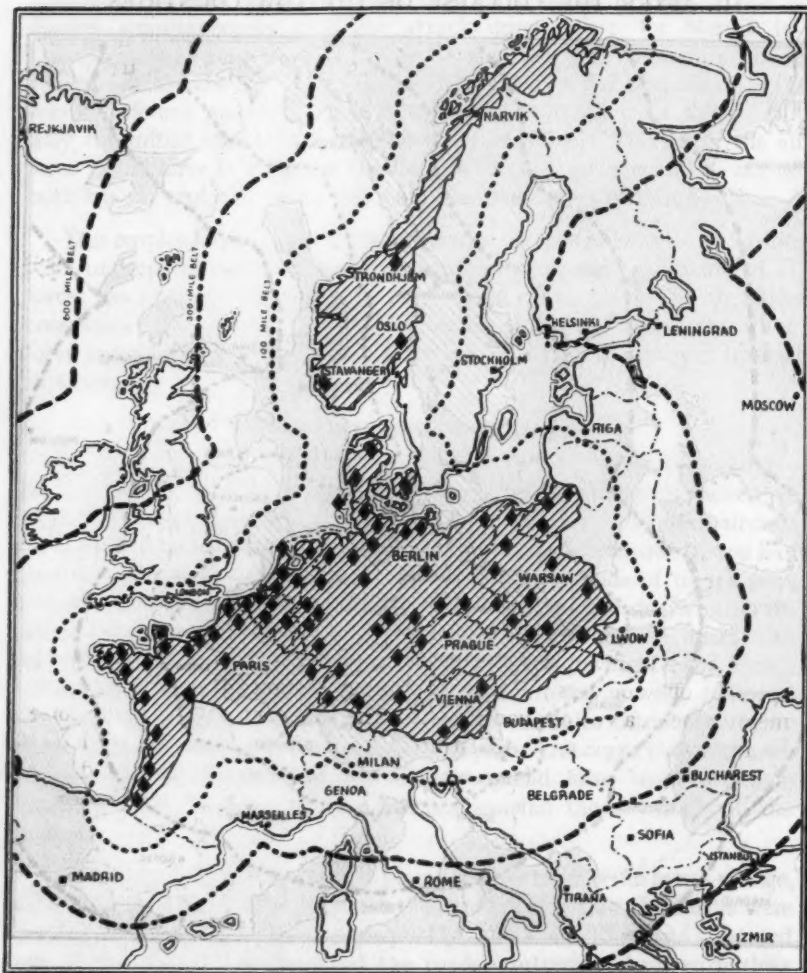


Apart from the first onslaught on the Low Countries, the employment of the *Luftwaffe* in the remainder of the campaign which led up to the capitulation of France on 21st June was mainly tactical. It was used as the vanguard of a huge army fighting open warfare by means of



mechanized and motorized forces ; the *Luftwaffe* had the duty of blasting the way for the tanks, forcing, wherever possible, troops to take cover until the tanks were upon them.

#### IV. AFTER THE COLLAPSE OF FRANCE



But the bombing of Brussels and the advance bombing of ports hardly come under the heading of the tactical use of the air arm. And throughout the actions there was evidence of the high place which the German



air force held in the direction of operations of the combined air forces. As the battle neared the Channel Ports the short-range fighters of the Royal Air Force based in England roared into action, joining their guns with those of the British fighter squadrons based in France; and to the combined action of the fighter units in France and England is due some part of the success of the evacuation operations from Dunkirk and other ports farther down the Channel; and that can be said without detracting in any way from the magnificent heroism of all who took part in that historic saving of the B.E.F. while France collapsed.

Italian air strategy can be dismissed as, so far, of little account in the first year of the War. The Italian air arm is too small to be employed as the *Luftwaffe* is employed, and probably the Italian temperament would not regard the huge sacrifice of their air force personnel as does the young Teuton. The Latin temperament is different. The Anglo-Italian air campaign comprised a series of aerial forays.

British air strategy has hardly had a chance to spread its wings. We have been engaged in a defensive struggle against great odds, but in that defence much has been accomplished. The weapon of the magnetic mine sown from the air has been countered, and we have developed our own mine-laying aircraft in ever-increasing strength. Aircraft and submarine can mine the Baltic and other waters where surface vessels could not penetrate. There are other developments in aircraft which are secret and may not be mentioned.

In Norway we suffered from the great disadvantage of far distant bases. We labour under that disadvantage in relation to industrial Germany now. We must make that up by utilising every mile flown to the best advantage. There must not be a bomb dropped upon a redundant target. To make up for the handicap of distance we must increase the speed of our bombers; for in air strategy distance is only a geometrical measurement, a vector quantity—it is the time factor which really counts. So in developing British air strategy to meet the situation we have to face let us consider time as speed and so overcome the handicap of distance.

Let us realize that we shall not defeat Germany by the strategy she used to defeat France, nor yet by the mental processes of the 1914-1918 war. But we can defeat her, and that at a fraction of the cost of life and treasure, if we develop a real air strategy for the future conduct of the war. As the weapon of offence the aeroplane must come first.

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## ARMY AND AIR FORCE CO-OPERATION.

THE official solution of the difficult problem of ensuring systematic co-operation between Air Force and Army units appeared in the form of an Air Ministry announcement on 1st December.

This, while preserving the unity of the two Services, goes far to meet the criticisms which have been freely levelled at the system of command when engaged in combined operations.

The principal feature of the new arrangements is the decision to set up a Command of the Royal Air Force to be called the Army Co-operation Command, which will comprise all squadrons allotted to Army formations in the United Kingdom together with the associated training units. The primary function of this Command will be to organize, experiment, and train in all forms of co-operation between the two Services. Operational employment of the squadrons will rest, as hitherto, with the commanders of the Army formations to which they are allotted.

The Army Co-operation Command will be under an Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief, and a senior Army officer is being appointed as head of his air staff. The air staffs of the Command and its subordinate formations will consist of Army and Royal Air Force officers in roughly equal proportions.

The formation of this Command is the outcome of the system of co-operation which has been steadily built up between the two Services over a long period, and the new organization is designed to accord with the lessons of recent operational experience. The Army Co-operation Command, with its joint staff, will work in constant association with the Army and Air Force Commands concerned. It will ensure the rapid development of army co-operation technique and also foster a common understanding of all aspects of inter-Service co-operation.

*(See also Air Notes.)*

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## THE TOLL OF OUR ANTI-AIRCRAFT BATTERIES

**I**N the year just ended anti-aircraft batteries in the British Isles have shot down and definitely destroyed a total of 444½ enemy aircraft. The odd half represents the A.A. gunner's share in an enemy bomber which was finished off by R.A.F. fighters after it had been "winged" by a near miss from a ground battery.

Of the total number of enemy aircraft destroyed by A.A. gun fire, 334 have been brought down since 1st September—a daily average of close on three. These successes have been gained against both day and night raiders, against seen and unseen targets, and the total does not include the very considerable extra number of enemy aircraft which have been so disabled or damaged by the effect of gun fire as to have been unable to reach home. In their score-sheet the Anti-Aircraft Command count as definitely destroyed only those aircraft whose fate is confirmed by the evidence of independent witnesses. The many others, evidently hit or damaged by near misses, which limp back from our coast to meet a watery end are only "probables" and find no place in the final score-sheet.

Three times in the course of 1940 Britain's A.A. gunners have shot down more than fifty enemy aircraft in a week—and on one memorable occasion the weekly score reached seventy. Their most successful twenty-four hours of the year was 15th August. On that day they destroyed twenty-three enemy machines—a record "bag," contributed to by gun batteries in seven cities from Dundee to Dover. Dover's share was the greatest with eleven definitely destroyed, and gunners on Tyneside and Tees-side contributed seven between them; Southampton, Harwich and Dundee made up the balance.

Almost as good a day was 31st August when twenty-one enemy aircraft were shot down from heights which ranged from 200 feet to 20,000 feet. Heavy gun batteries of 4.5 and 3.7 in. calibre, lighter guns of 3 in. and 40 mm., and machine guns all played their part in securing this "bag," and sixteen of the twenty-one were destroyed within an hour and a half during that evening's "blitz."

Illustrative of the remarkable advances achieved in anti-aircraft gunnery since the last war is the fact that whereas in 1918 an aircraft flying at 8,000 feet was virtually out of reach of gun batteries, the

average height at which this year's 444 successes have been scored is 16,000 feet. It should also be noted that instead of the 90-100 miles per hour of the 1918 bomber, the speed of the modern raider may be of the order of 350 m.p.h. Statistics over the past year have shown that, despite the much greater height and higher speed of the 1940 raider, it is actually costing very little more in ammunition expenditure to bring down a "night bird" to-day than was required to destroy a low-flying "day bird" at the end of the last war.

A popular fallacy about A.A. gunnery is that the unseen enemy aircraft heard overhead can ever be at the point at which the guns are firing. For, assuming a raider is passing overhead 25,000 feet up, and flying at 300 m.p.h., the sound of its engine apparently overhead will not in fact be heard on the ground until it has passed some two miles beyond the overhead point. To hit it with a shell at that great height the A.A. gunner may have to aim at a point four miles further on still. Then, if the raider does not alter course or height, as it almost invariably does when under fire, climbing shell and bomber will meet. Thus the raider which is heard apparently over the Crystal Palace may at that moment actually be over Dulwich, and the shell which is fired from the Crystal Palace must go to a point over Parliament Square to hit it.

Even by day and firing at a visible target, the A.A. gunner spotting a high-flying raider must still allow for the several miles it will have travelled before the shell can reach it. He may sight the aircraft over Middlesbrough, but the projectile with which he brings it down may have to burst over Stockton, four miles away.

Such are some of the intricate problems which have beset our A.A. gunners since the outbreak of war; but the success with which they are being solved is demonstrated by the achievements of the past year. Four hundred and forty-four enemy aircraft definitely destroyed, many of them unseen targets and most of them brought down from more than three miles high, is a notable record for the old year and a promising augury for the new.

## A CENTURY OF THE CHINA STATION

By FRANK C. BOWEN

**T**HE occupation of the island of Hong Kong by the British in 1841, and its surrender by the Chinese Government, may conveniently be reckoned as the real beginning of the China Station, although it was only a division of the East Indian command for over twenty years afterwards and H.M. ships had visited Chinese waters before that date. In the absence of a base, however primitive, there was no pretence at a permanent naval squadron, an additional argument against its maintenance being the attitude of the Chinese Government which made unnecessary visits of British warships in peace-time liable to provoke incidents very derogatory to the dignity of the Navy, although, during the Napoleonic Wars, H.M. ships on convoy duty were allowed by China to water and revictual in their ports under strict supervision. As the East India Company had the monopoly of British trade to China until 1834, its naval units were used for all the police work that was necessary; as a trading concern it had less "face" than the Navy to lose in the event of unpleasant incidents. When this monopoly was ended the Commander-in-Chief of the East Indies squadron had orders to arrange for occasional naval visits, but he was advised that one sloop was sufficient for the China Seas; if another should be considered necessary at any time, the Governor-General of India was to be consulted before she was despatched. He was also to make very sure that the officers sent on to the section should have a good knowledge of Chinese law and custom and that Chinese piracy should be ignored as far as possible. In spite of these precautions to avoid offending the Chinese the two countries were unmistakably drifting towards war in the late 'Thirties, and in 1837 the Admiralty issued orders that one or more ships were to visit the China Seas as frequently as possible, the bigger the better. Neither the concessions nor the display of force averted the war, which started in January, 1840, when the Emperor ordered all British trade to stop. In January, 1841, Hong Kong was officially ceded, with an indemnity to Britain, and on the 26th Commodore J. Gordon Bremer took formal possession, although the Emperor disavowed the treaty and hostilities were resumed until the final treaty was signed on board H.M.S. "Cornwallis" in August, 1842. Hong Kong was used as a British base throughout the First China War, which resulted in quite a large number of H.M. ships being sent on to the station, from line-of-battleships to brigs, and also thirteen units of the East India Company's Navy, but



they were there only as a temporary measure and were not a permanent squadron. The six-gun paddle frigate "Vixen" and the iron-hulled East India Company's steamer "Nemesis" were included in this fleet.

#### OPERATIONS AGAINST PIRACY

Under the treaty which concluded the war, Britain was allowed to station a warship at each of the treaty ports—Canton, Amoy, Foochow, Ningpo and Shanghai—but had to give the Chinese notice of any changes. H.M. ships cruising to protect commerce were allowed to visit any Chinese port. These facilities resulted in the establishment of a permanent British naval force and, although it was still part of the East Indian command, the vessels sent to Chinese waters had a natural tendency to stay there. The first thing to be done was to suppress the pirates, who had made their headquarters on Hong Kong Island for years, about the only Chinese who had any taste for its inhospitable shores. Pirate ships destroyed came under the old law with regard to prize bounty and this, with the big freights to be earned for the transport of specie in H.M. ships, made the China Station a very profitable one for Commanding officers. There were soon complaints that the Navy was destroying any number of peaceable Chinese traders on the plea that they were pirates, and drawing rewards for it. There was no doubt that this often occurred, not through any carelessness on the part of the officers concerned, but because they were bound to make use of Chinese informers who deliberately used H.M. ships for purposes of blackmail and private vengeance. For the greater part of the decade the operations against pirates were ill-regulated, sometimes encouraged and sometimes checked for fear of offending Chinese susceptibilities, but in 1849 matters had become so serious, with big pirate fleets which had been fitted out by looting government forts openly at sea, that serious operations had to be undertaken. Captain John Dalrymple Hay distinguished himself in these, and the Navy's operations resulted in the temporary suspension of large scale piracy, although it was not by any means stamped out. The complaints of irregular proceedings and the amount paid out in prize money combined to disturb the Government at home. In 1848, Palmerston suggested the maintenance of a flotilla of gunboats on the station, quite independent of the Commander-in-Chief, which should be subsidised by the Chinese authorities to help them in the suppression of piracy and in 1850, the Government having paid £93,005 in prize bounty, the law was amended and the Admiralty made awards "according to the degree of risk and merit of the service."

As soon as Hong Kong was occupied and the plans for the city prepared, sites for a naval depot, a dockyard, barracks and military

cantonments were chosen, but when the Crimean War broke out fourteen years later, the naval establishment only consisted of a signal station, a victualling yard and a small dock. No attempt had been made to develop Hong Kong as a base, although from 1844 onwards the China Section had been regarded as the most important part of the East Indian squadron. Two years later the division consisted of a third-rate, a frigate, five sloops and one steamer; in 1853 a second frigate was added and at about the same time three of the sloops were replaced by steamers, in spite of the great coal difficulty which forced them to do practically all their cruising under sail. Good coal was being discovered in various parts of China, but the Government was against its use by the Navy or merchant ships, and practically all supplies had to go round the Cape by sailing ship. The smaller craft were being used very largely for surveying services, which were particularly meritorious.

When the Russian War broke out in 1854, no attempt was made to carry out active operations with the China squadron, and when the Anglo-French attack on Kamschatka was planned it was the Pacific squadron which was used. This was probably because there were already signs of further trouble with the Chinese Government over the opium question, and there was the strong possibility that they would bring matters to a head if they thought that the British Navy had its hands fully occupied with the Russians. Hong Kong was valued principally for its commercial services, but these required constant protection and the growing trade with China, coupled with the opening of Japan, led to the strengthening of the squadron. The flagship was H.M. 50-gun frigate "Winchester," but practically all the other units of the fleet were small craft suitable for their work. The East India Company's ships were available until the Mutiny, but they were generally employed in the East Indian section of the station and were only occasionally sent up into the China Seas. When matters became more and more serious and it was obvious that a Second China War was imminent, H.M. 84-gun "Calcutta" and numerous small ships reinforced the station. Operations started in 1856 and lasted, with an intermission while the Navy assisted in the suppression of the Indian Mutiny, for nearly four years. The force in Chinese waters had to be strengthened by a large number of smaller vessels, including many of the famous gunboats which had been built of green timber for the Crimean War and which were anything but comfortable vessels in the Far East. The French Fleet co-operated with the British for a large part of the campaign, which was brought to a successful conclusion and a satisfactory treaty arranged, after there had been some costly reverses. Even during the progress of the war many of the Chinese mandarins co-operated with

H.M. ships in their operations against pirates, who showed their usual inclination to take advantage of the opportunity.

After the capture of the Taku forts and the signing of peace, the China station settled down to a new era. One of its great functions was then the suppression of piracy, which was tackled in a more businesslike manner. The establishment of the British plenipotentiary at Canton had robbed Hong Kong of its judicial and diplomatic importance, and far more attention was paid to developing it as a naval base. Other navies sent warships to China to assist in the checking of piracy, which was greatly encouraged by the increase in trade after the peace and which attracted a number of European and American criminals to co-operate with the Chinese and to give them far better organisation. The laxity of the Hong Kong authorities in permitting the sale of arms and ammunition to Chinese who required them for piratical purposes added to the Navy's difficulties, but the gunboats under the command of Lieutenants did excellent work. Many of these were the Crimean gunboats already mentioned, mounting one 68-pounder and one 32-pounder, generally backed by two small howitzers. The "River" class were specially designed for the service, but were little more satisfactory.

In 1864, the China squadron was separated from the East Indies command and organized in four divisions, Malacca under the Senior Officer at Singapore, South China under a Commodore at Hong Kong, North China under the Senior Officer at Shanghai and Japan under the Senior Officer at Yokohama. H.M. 78-gun "Rodney" was flagship for several years, but in 1867 the first ironclad was attached to the squadron, H.M.S. "Ocean." At that time the Commander-in-Chief was Vice-Admiral the Hon. Sir Henry Keppel, who had succeeded Rear-Admiral G. St. V. Duckworth King who had been Commander-in-Chief of the East Indies squadron before it was divided, and who was to be succeeded by Vice-Admiral Sir Henry Kellett in the summer of 1869. The squadron was, it must be confessed, a curiously miscellaneous one, but homogeneity was not considered even for the commands which were intended to operate as squadrons. The flagship was H.M. 78-gun screw line-of-battleship "Rodney," and there was in addition H.M. ironclad "Ocean" (24 guns) already mentioned. H.M. screw corvettes "Pearl" and "Pelorus" each mounted 21 guns and the paddle sloop "Basilisk" six. The screw sloops were the "Icarus" (3), "Perseus" (15), "Rattler" (17), "Rinaldo" (7) and "Zebra" (7). Classed as screw gun vessels were the "Algerine" (1), "Cormorant" (4), "Leven" (2), "Serpent" (4) and "Slaney" (1). The surveying vessels "Rifleman" and "Sylvia" each mounted five guns, the troopship "Adventure" two, while the

screw tender "Manilla" and the paddle despatch vessel "Salamis" were not seriously armed. The gunboat fleet, mostly relics from the Crimea, consisted of the "Banterer," "Bouncer," "Bustard," "Cockchafer," "Dove," "Drake," "Firm," "Forester," "Grasshopper," "Hardy," "Havock," "Insolent," "Janus," "Opossum," "Snap," "Starling," "Watchful," "Weazel" and "Woodcock." In commission for harbour service the "Princess Charlotte" (12) was the receiving ship at Hong Kong, and the "Acorn" a hospital ship at Shanghai. In addition, there were at Hong Kong the hospital hulks "Flamer" (ex-gunboat), and the "Meeanee" and "Melville" (ex-third rates), while the former gunboat "Clown" was a coal depot. Although the station did not offer the financial advantages that it did in the old days it was a paradise for young officers, and it is remarkable how many of the Lieutenants in command of the gunboats, as well as the junior Post-Captains and Commanders in some of the bigger ships, were later to attain high rank in the Service. The death rate was, however, very heavy.

#### THE RUSSIAN SCARE

The character of the station began to change when Russia developed her interests in the Far East, which started with her treaty with China in 1860. France was also increasing her interests, and in 1883 had started the operations which finally made Indo-China a French colony. These operations lasted for a number of years, and in the middle of them occurred the Russian "scare" of 1885. At that time Russia had a considerable force in Chinese waters, and the British Fleet under Vice-Admiral Sir William Dowell, with his flag in H.M. battleship "Audacious," consisted of the battleships "Agamemnon" and "Invincible," neither of them particularly successful vessels, the corvettes "Champion," "Cleopatra," "Curacoa" and "Sapphire," the sloops "Albatross," "Daring," "Pegasus" and "Wanderer," the gun vessels "Linnet," "Midge" and "Swift," the gunboats "Cockchafer," "Espoir," "Firebrand," "Merlin" and "Zephyr," and the paddle despatch vessel "Vigilant." The manner in which some of these were told off to shadow Russian ships has been the subject of many stories. The British India Liner "India," the Glen Liner "Glenogle" and the P. & O. Liner "Rosetta" were converted into auxiliary cruisers for the station, while the Union Liner "Mexican" and the Castle Liner "Pembroke Castle" were sent with troops to Hong Kong, there to be converted into cruisers. The scare passed over, but it was a very expensive lesson in how not to commission and equip armed merchant cruisers and it led to a proper system being adopted in co-operation with the companies two years later and the subject being treated seriously.



The result of the China-Japanese War of 1894-5 was the creation of a new naval power in the East, while the co-operation of Germany and France with Russia to rob Japan of her most valuable spoils on the mainland completely altered the position of the European powers. Russia got Port Arthur, Germany Kiaou-Chow and France part of Kiang-Hung. Britain refused to take any part in this spoliation, so there was no Japanese objection to our leasing the site of a base at Wei-Hai-Wei, although its natural disadvantages made it of little use to the fleet. Hong Kong was improved; its boundaries were extended by treaty and at Hong Kong itself, where the Navy had a lien on one of the docks owned by the Hong Kong and Kowloon Dock Company, the work of extending the dockyard, which was already started, was hurried forward. It was a difficult and expensive matter, and many considered that the money would have been better spent at Kowloon where there was better water, but the Admiralty thought otherwise, and the Navy was generally in agreement. The new dry dock, 550 feet by 95, was completed in 1904.

In 1895, the China squadron consisted of H.M. battleship "Centurion," a vessel specially designed with shallow draught to pass through the Suez Canal to China, as the flag of the Vice-Admiral, H.M. cruisers "Archer," "Caroline," "Mercury," "Porpoise," "Pique," "Rainbow" and "Undaunted," and eleven sloops, gun vessels and gunboats, with the cruisers "Æolus," "Edgar" and "Spartan" temporarily attached. Early in 1898 strong reinforcements were sent out, including H.M. battleships "Barfleur" and "Majestic," while the "Canopus" type was laid down at home to reinforce the squadron when necessary. The Yangtse-Kiang had been recognised as a British sphere of influence and the West River was opened to foreign trade in 1897, when the invention of the tunnel stern for shallow-draught vessels by the late Sir Alfred Yarrow permitted an entirely new type of gunboat to be designed for service on the Chinese rivers. The six vessels of the "Sandpiper" class (85 tons, 9 knots, mean draught 20 inches) were built by Messrs. Yarrow, and the "Woodcock" and "Woodlark" (150 tons, 13 knots, draught 2 feet) by Messrs. Thornycroft. All of them carried two 6-pounder quick-firers and maxims, and they proved so successful that they were soon followed by the improved "Teal" and "Moorhen." These little ships served for many years and were most effective in checking piracy on the rivers, a particularly difficult task because it was not carried out by recognisable fleets of fighting junks, but generally by the pirates shipping as passengers and seizing the ship at a given signal.

When the Boxer rising broke out against foreigners in China in 1900 the squadron was a strong one, consisting of the sister battleships



"Centurion" and "Barfleur," as the flag of the Vice-Admiral and Rear-Admiral respectively, the new battleship "Goliath," the cruisers "Argonaut," "Aurora," "Bonaventure," "Brisk," "Endymion," "Hermione," "Orlando," "Pique," "Terrible" and "Undaunted," the destroyers "Fame," "Handy," "Hart," "Janus," "Otter" and "Whiting," and several sloops, gunboats, etc., while the cruisers "Arethusa," "Astraea," "Dido," "Isis," "Marathon," "Mohawk" and "Wallaroo" were temporarily added. H.M. battleship "Ocean" was transferred from the Mediterranean station, but the Navy's actual operations during the rising were mostly on land, although the capture of four German-built Chinese destroyers by H.M.S. "Fame" and "Whiting," the former under Lieutenant Roger Keyes, and the operations against the water face of the Taku forts saw the fleet in its proper element. After the rising the squadron remained a very strong one, H.M. battleship "Glory" being flagship, her sister the "Albion" second flagship, and two more of the same class, "Ocean" and "Vengeance," being in the fleet, with ten cruisers, destroyers, sloops and other small craft. Germany had by then reduced her Eastern fleet, but France and Russia still had very strong forces in Chinese waters.

#### THE ANGLO-JAPANESE ALLIANCE

The Anglo-Japanese Alliance was signed in January, 1902, but the fleet was maintained at strength until 1904 when the naval result of the Russo-Japanese War was considered to be settled and the bigger ships were dispersed. The new fleet consisted of the big protected cruiser "Diadem" as flagship, backed by her sister ship "Andromeda," the armoured cruisers "Hogue" and "Sutlej," the Naval-Defence-Act cruisers "Astraea," "Bonaventure" and "Flora," and thirteen destroyers with river gunboats and other small craft. In 1906, the armoured cruisers "King Alfred," "Kent" and "Monmouth" went out; the "Diadem," "Astraea" and "Flora" completing the cruiser squadron, while the destroyers were reduced to seven in number.

Before the outbreak of war in 1914, it had long been arranged that, in the event of an emergency, the Eastern Fleet should be formed by the combination of the East Indies squadron, the China squadron, the Australian squadron and New Zealand division which, in the actual event, gave a total strength of two battleships, one battle cruiser, two large cruisers, eleven light cruisers, eleven destroyers, five submarines and small craft. H.M. battleship "Triumph," which we had taken over from the Chileans, was in reserve at Hong Kong, the rest of the China squadron consisting of the flagship "Minotaur" (armoured cruiser), and the smaller cruisers "Hampshire," "Newcastle" and "Yarmouth"

with small craft, eight destroyers and three submarines of the "C" class. It proved very difficult to find a full crew for the "Triumph" and the auxiliary cruisers which were commissioned on the station—"Himalaya," "Empress of Asia," "Empress of Japan" and "Empress of Russia"—but this was contrived with the crews of the river gunboats, reservists and volunteers from the Army, including Indian sepoys. The entry of Japan into the war permitted Admiral Jerram to concentrate on von Spee's German China squadron, but H.M.S. "Triumph" and certain other vessels co-operated in the capture of Tsing-Tau. Later the China squadron was almost entirely withdrawn to home waters, but at the extreme end of the War there was a certain amount to be done on the Russian Eastern coast.

During the War, for operations in the Middle East, Messrs. Yarrow & Company had designed an entirely new standard of shallow draught gunboat, which was called a China gunboat for purposes of secrecy, but which did not go out to China until after the Armistice. With a displacement of 625 tons these ships had a draught of four feet, mounted two 6-inch, a 3-inch anti-aircraft and ten smaller guns and had a speed of fourteen knots which they all exceeded. They were particularly useful vessels both in their original role and later on the China Station, and as they and the earlier gunboats wore out they had been replaced by a number of new vessels built between 1927 and 1938, varying in design according to the waters in which they are intended to work.

#### POST-WAR CONDITIONS

The squadron was reconstituted as soon as possible after the War, the big cruiser "Hawkins," which had been designed with an unusually large radius of action, going out as flagship of the Vice-Admiral Commander-in-Chief. With her were four light cruisers of the "C" class—"Carlisle," "Colombo," "Cairo" and "Curlew"—of which the last three were later replaced by the bigger "Despatch," "Diomedé" and "Durban." The former yacht "Alacrity" acted as despatch vessel to the Commander-in-Chief, and there were five "Flower" class sloops, twelve "L" class submarines and various river gunboats, depot ships, etc. The Yangtse patrol was of sufficient importance to be put under a Rear-Admiral, at first flying his flag in the old paddler "Kinsha," but transferring to the war-built gunboat "Bee," altered for the purpose, in 1921.

The civil disturbances in China, and the general disorders in the country, put a big responsibility on to the shoulders of the Navy to protect British lives and trade interests, while the missionaries also demanded attention. The squadron was reinforced by trading vessels

of appropriate design, intended for local work, being taken up and lightly armed, but events put a big strain on both material and personnel. In 1925, H.M. cruiser "Cairo" was temporarily transferred from the East India squadron, and in the following year the cruisers "Emerald" and "Enterprise," with the aircraft carrier "Hermes," the cruiser "Caradoc" and the Third Destroyer Flotilla from the Mediterranean. In 1927, the cruiser "Frobisher" and four ships of the "D" class went from the Mediterranean, followed by the aircraft carrier "Argus" and the Eighth Destroyer Flotilla from home. The hospital ship "Maine" and additional river gunboats which had been kept in reserve in Malta were also sent out, while the Expeditionary Force was headed by a battalion of a thousand Royal Marines under Lieut.-Colonel Carpenter. All H.M. ships above Hankow were withdrawn and, as usual, serious outbreaks of piracy on the coast had to be dealt with; even a submarine proved valuable for that work.

#### THE WASHINGTON DISARMAMENT TREATY

The Washington Disarmament Treaty ended the Anglo-Japanese Alliance and prevented the extension of the fortifications at Hong Kong; while the limitation of capital ships averted the threatened war between Japan and the United States, Britain's quota made it quite impossible to spare any for the China station. When the first 10,000-ton "County" cruisers of the "Washington" type were completed they were sent out to the China station, and in 1928 the squadron consisted of five of them and one smaller ship for up-river work. The big patrol submarines of the "P" type were also sent out as soon as they were completed, and in 1933 the aircraft carrier "Eagle" replaced the smaller "Hermes."

In 1919, during his survey of Imperial defence, the late Earl Jellicoe made a special study of the Far Eastern and Pacific position and advocated the formation of a powerful Eastern fleet on the pre-1914 basis but having a minimum strength of eight battleships, eight battle cruisers, ten light cruisers, forty destroyers and thirty-six submarines—a strength which was quite impossible under the Washington Treaty. The Australian delegates to the Imperial Conference strongly backed this, but there was disagreement over the matter of cost and the scheme fell through before Washington. The strategical idea of an Eastern fleet has, however, been kept in being, and periodically conferences and combined exercises have been held. The Singapore base remains, of course, a very big factor in the strategical situation.

## SOME LESSONS OF THE LAST WAR

By BRIGADIER-GENERAL W. D. CROFT, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O.

**W**HEN someone asked a young fellow who had just lately returned to his unit from a school of instruction in Home Guard duties what he had learnt there he replied : " Oh, I was told I must forget everything I learnt in the last war." This is in marked contrast to the tale of the last-joined subaltern of a Highland regiment who asked an old Peninsular veteran how to master the art of war. " By fighting—and a damn deal of it," came the prompt reply. Well, we of the older generation must have learnt something, if a " damn deal of fighting " is any criterion. But just exactly what did we learn ? The correct application of smoke, for instance : smoke as a weapon is a good friend, but a bad neighbour : that lesson could have been learnt in the days of smoke powder when both sides were forced to stop shooting from time to time to allow the smoke cloud to drift away *because it was blinding them*. In 1916, a certain division was fortunate enough to have appointed as its C.R.A. an officer whom one of his contemporaries described as the best gunner in Europe. Years ahead of his time, he taught everyone in that division to work together, both gunners and infantry, and he taught everyone how to use smoke to the best advantage. Luckily for the division, the divisional commander—himself a gunner, went home as Master General of Ordnance after the Somme battles. As a result, by 1917 the division was getting as much smoke as it liked to ask for, since no one else appeared to realise its possibilities. But in 1918 other divisions had also found out its possibilities ; and smoke was difficult to get in anything like the quantities that the division had been accustomed to. By then, however, the C.R.A.—now himself the divisional commander, had taught the division the use of economy in its application ; the whiff now replaced the cloud. Daylight raids and even something more ambitious could be assisted by judicious application of smoke on the hostile O.P.'s—always remembering to keep the smoke-screen well away from the attacker. At the end of the war that division could do almost anything with smoke, and the casualties saved by its correct use must have been substantial, for it made surprise possible. After the taking of Meteren, in July 1918, a captured order revealed that the German general staff had been taken completely by surprise through the use of smoke. The position was a strong one, and the order revealed that the Germans expected to be attacked from the high ground.

to their North. In the event they were attacked from the West, but the surprise was complete owing to all their O.P.'s being blinded.

In short, we have the axiom "use smoke only in the attack, never in the defence."

#### HAND AND RIFLE GRENADES

Another weapon, used for the first time in the war of 1914-18, is the rifle grenade. In the hands of a well-trained team, rifle grenades were the only means of helping the attacking infantry forward after they had been pinned down in the open by some machine gunner in those innumerable little section battles which took place so long as the platoon had a competent leader. Now, in the open, the grenade is a bad neighbour; it has a killing range of 25 yards—a distance beyond the throw of the average man when encumbered with a rifle and other impedimenta. In 1915, the writer joined a division which was being "entered" to bombing. At the time he knew no better, so he organized an intersection bombing league. There were sixty-four sections in a battalion, and it took six months to finish all the matches to decide which was the best section. After all this practice, it was discovered that the throw of a Mills hand grenade in the open averaged 20 yards into a one-foot ring. Therefore a man who throws a grenade in the open is endangering his own life and the lives of his comrades. When the war became static, and both sides dug themselves in, the hand grenade was practically the only weapon used; it could be thrown, and was generally thrown, from behind cover in comparative safety; it made a most comforting row; and it is a fact that both sides took to it like ducks to water. It is also a fact that the amount of damage inflicted on the enemy was surprisingly small, though the claims made were often fantastic. It may be fairly alleged that actually more damage was inflicted on one's friends than on one's enemies.

Shortly afterwards the battalion entered the Somme battle, and after numerous small affairs took part in the attack on Delville Wood and Longueval. Although the objectives were limited, the operations on the first day were certainly not those of trench warfare, and by the end of the day only one instance of bomb-throwing came to light. Incidentally, a much reduced battalion, having reached its objective, proceeded to dig itself in on the top of a ridge overlooking a valley in which was an orchard. The battalion was suffering many casualties from snipers in the trees of this orchard. The C.O. told the men to shoot them down, but he soon found that not one man could hit anything at a range at which the archers of Crecy would have made that orchard untenable. Unfortunately, he had never seen the battalion shoot on



a range of more than 25 yards! In the event he, five of the remaining officers and one Regular Army sergeant kept down the sniping while the battalion dug itself in.

#### THE VALUE OF RIFLE FIRE

Owing to heavy casualties the division had a long rest and every man in the battalion was made to fire 50 rounds a day on a range of 200 yards. Until the end of the war that battalion threw no more hand bombs, but the value of the rifle grenade was constantly demonstrated. Luckily for the battalion commander, a new Brigadier was in full agreement about the dangers to one's own side from the hand bomb in the open. "If you met a tiger coming down the street, would you shoot him with a rifle or would you chuck a hand grenade at him?" he, the slayer of many tigers, used to ask. Early in 1917 the battalion worked up to 150 rounds a day; as soon as a man knew his rifle, battle practices only were fired: anything to excite the men, to disturb their aim. The results were most gratifying; after all this practice the average man in that battalion could hit anything moving up to 300 yards; he could shoot with amazing speed—quite as well, if not better than, the old Army of 1914 at that range; and he had been taught to nip up and fire quickly from a trench and bob down equally quickly. The value of this training was demonstrated in a remarkable way. One day, just before the battle of Arras in April, 1917, the battalion was ordered to do a reconnaissance by day to discover whether or not the enemy opposite were still holding their trenches. Three companies went over the top, with the fourth in reserve in our front line trenches. On reaching the hostile trenches, while the battalion was engaged in clearing up the dug-outs and reorganizing previous to a further advance, the local storm troops counter-attacked down a trench parallel to and about 20 yards from the one held by the battalion. A rain of German stick bombs came over, doing surprisingly little damage. Several of the men turned to the battalion commander and shouted, "Where are our bombs?" An awkward moment: he replied, "Jump up and shoot 'em!" Led by an officer, they proceeded to carry out the practice already referred to, with surprising results. Not one shot did the Germans fire in reply—evidently they were "trench-sodden" too—but they all climbed out of their trench and began to run back to a support trench about 100 yards in rear. At that moment the riflemen came into their own—very few of those storm troops got across. After that demonstration, the battalion was well content to pin its faith on the rifle and to discard the grenade as a hand weapon—though not as a rifle grenade—for the rest of the war.

In June of that year the battalion, now far better shots as the result of incessant training in battle practices—they could fire 150 rounds a

day with unlimited ammunition—took part in a brigade attack on Greenland Hill, East of Arras. Next morning, from the hill which they had captured during the night, they could see the enemy constantly exposing themselves along a cutting about 300 yards away. All that day the Germans exposed themselves to our rifle fire and suffered heavy casualties. Had machine guns or artillery been employed they would have kept under cover. In the March retreat, the battalion had the time of their lives, especially on a certain Sunday, for the enemy came on in crowds and were ruthlessly slaughtered by rifle fire alone—the men notched their rifles in that retreat. The reader can judge for himself what lessons there are to be learnt from the misuse of the hand grenade and the correct use of that most accurate killer—the rifle, in the war of 1914–1918.

#### BATTALION SCOUTS

This battalion was reinforced by highly-trained, hand-picked battalion scouts. On the whole, battalion scouts were looked on with suspicion by higher authority: why have special gladiators? Surely it were better to have a high standard throughout the battalion in preference to selected men who undertook the hazardous jobs. But the battalion commander had to face facts: the average town-bred man is no scout. The C.O. was forced, therefore, to take the exceptions and pick the required number from among the few countrymen in the ranks. Just as the eyes and ears are the most important members of the human body when awake, so, in like manner, are regimental scouts the eyes and ears of a battalion *asleep* or *awake*. They did no regimental duty, for they were always on duty; they reported direct to the C.O. under their very hand-picked officer; in many cases their career was short and at all times exciting. Gladiators? Yes, undoubtedly they were gladiators, but gladiators the wrong way round, as it were, for they watched over the battalion asleep or awake—the battalion never watched them, and, indeed, hardly ever saw them. It was no uncommon thing for these scouts to remain out in no man's land for a day and a night, always watching the enemy, always reporting his movements, always ready to attack, kill or capture hostile patrols. So long as an enemy is constantly watched he can never spring a surprise: that is a very old and true saying. But he must be watched by specially selected and trained men. The battalion commander used also to train company scouts, and he insisted on all men of companies doing their share of patrol, in order to accustom them to move about with individual boldness, mutual understanding, and a quick eye for ground. But when it came to the eyes and ears of his battalion, he could not afford to take chances; and the regimental scout proved to be the solution. After the war, however, it was noticeable that scouts were almost

unknown in the average infantry battalion—a lesson of the war which should never have been allowed to be forgotten.

The fighting patrol is, it is suggested, the direct offspring of the last war. For the most part they formed raiding parties which went out with the object of securing an identification. But in 1917 and 1918, when operations began to open up and no-man's-land became correspondingly wide, these fighting patrols were sent out with the intention of driving in hostile patrols. It is hoped that the fighting patrol has come to stay—or has it been allowed to lapse on the ground that everything learnt in the last war must be forgotten?

#### WOOD FIGHTING

Wood fighting is an art in itself and needs much training. It is a fact that as soon as the attacker enters a wood he must depend entirely on his own weapons, because his supporting artillery dare not assist him, since they cannot tell where he may be until he has actually emerged on the other side. Again, direction is extremely difficult to maintain, and it is necessary to tell off an officer or man to do nothing else but maintain direction with a compass. It must be remembered, too, that a wood may have been heavily bombed or knocked about by shell fire; if the wood is large and capable of concealing large numbers of men this is bound to happen in heavy fighting. Consequently a wood which ordinarily might be quite easy to penetrate will be impassable, if involved in the fighting area, by the time it may be necessary to attempt its capture. There is an outstanding example of the wrong way and the right way of attacking a wood when held by hostile machine gunners, in the fighting in Trones Wood in the second week in July, 1916, during the early part of the battle of the Somme. Trones Wood formed an *irregular* shaped triangle about half a mile in extent and about a quarter of a mile at its base—some 20 acres in all. The whole trouble for the attackers started with that base, for if the attackers lined up along and parallel to the base, as they did time and again, the line of advance took them out not at the apex of the triangle but at one of the sides of the triangle, leaving a considerable portion of the wood, including the apex, undrawn. And the German machine gunners took full advantage of this mistake, shooting down our men on the exposed flank as they moved along with rifles for the most part slung, bomb in hand. It took the best part of four divisions to clear that wood, and on the eve of the big attack against Delville Wood of the 14th July, parts of it were still untaken.

Then the best soldier that the writer ever served with, Frank Maxwell, who, by sheer force of his personality, had made a first-class battalion out of very ordinary material, was told to capture the wood

at all costs. A study of the air photo of the wood showed him at once where everyone had gone wrong: he had got to form up *square* in the wood before starting so as to insure that it would be properly combed to the apex. He, too, was not enamoured of the hand bomb in open warfare, and he would not allow the anarchist's weapon on this occasion. Extending three companies inside the wood with one company in reserve under his hand, he lined them up at exactly the correct angle. Putting a reliable officer with a compass in the centre with orders to march on a given compass bearing, he ordered the advance by the centre. In order to ensure that the enemy machine gunners should not have it all their own way at any time during the attack he told the men to fire as they advanced *from the hip*. By that time the wood resembled an impenetrable jungle owing to the heavy and continuous shelling by our people after the failures of numerous attacks. It was impossible to move for more than 20 yards or so without losing touch one with another. Appreciating this, Maxwell ordered the advance to halt and reorganize every 20 yards, the Lewis guns being brought into action and firing continuously as the riflemen reorganized. So it will be seen that a steady stream of bullets was ripping through the wood during the whole time the battalion attacked it. It was not until they emerged from the apex that they saw the Boche fleeing away from it. The moment the battalion emerged they went forward about 100 yards in front of the wood and dug themselves in. They hadn't half finished when the Boche shelling began on receipt of information that the wood was now captured. But, thanks to being well out in front, the battalion sustained no casualties.

Not long afterwards, Maxwell came to command the brigade in which the writer was serving. All battalions used to practise wood fighting, on the principle of keeping the unseen enemy constantly under fire and of never allowing the advance to go on long enough to become disorganized. As time went on, all sorts of improvements in details were introduced, such as covering the preliminary extension with regimental scouts; but the basic principles of continuous firing whether halted or on the move, and always stopping to reorganise the line by halting after going but a short distance, were never departed from. It must not be forgotten that the capture of a big wood when large forces have gained contact involves going through a terrible tangle of broken branches and fallen trees as the result of dive bombing or shell fire. Therefore the advance must be deliberate and thorough.

In conclusion, I think that it is a fair answer to our original query that not only did we learn "something" in the last war, but also that "something" was extremely valuable. Considering the casualties we suffered, it would indeed be strange if it were otherwise.



## THE BALTIC AS A THEATRE OF WAR THE CAMPAIGN OF 1854

By LIEUTENANT R. F. COLVILLE, R.N.

**I**T is an historical fact that before the end of most of our Continental wars we have been compelled to carry out operations in the Baltic. Although changes in weapons may modify tactics, geography is wont to be an abiding factor in strategy. The Anglo-French campaign in the Baltic during the so-called Crimean War may, therefore, be of some interest at the present time.

In 1854 the military situation in the Baltic was not so very different from what it is to-day for then, as now, Russia held the seaboard of Finland, Latvia, Esthonia and Lithuania. Sweden, realizing that she would always have her for a neighbour, sat uneasily on the fence. The main difference was that Prussia, not being the Power she has since become, was virtually a pro-Russian non-belligerent.

Early in that year, when war appeared to be imminent, it was decided that a fleet should be dispatched to the Baltic and that the Russians should be blockaded as soon as the ice allowed. Sir Charles Napier was selected for command and sailed, with part of his hastily equipped and ill-manned fleet from the Downs on 14th March. The passage of the North Sea took four days and the fleet remained for a while in Wingo Sound, exercising hard; gunnery and sail training being the most important requirements in this suddenly commissioned "Reserve Fleet."

Napier himself went on to Copenhagen to learn what he could of conditions in the Baltic and to test the Danish attitude of neutrality. Information concerning ice confirmed the report of an early thaw, and on his return the fleet moved to Anholt, then on to Kiel, cruising through the Belt by day, much hampered by fog, and anchoring at night. Gunnery continued to be exercised assiduously, but the Admiralty grew so alarmed over the expenditure of ammunition that they ordered the practices to be cut down. Napier was full of righteous indignation that the ordnance should not have built up sufficient reserves, but realizing that it was essential to have some ammunition remaining in case he did happen to meet the Russians, carried out the Admiralty instructions and contented himself with writing strong letters about the general lack of equipment and training of his fleet.

By the 5th April, Rear-Admiral Plumridge with an advanced squadron was reconnoitring Sveaborg and the Gulf of Finland; Napier himself had returned to Copenhagen and the remainder of the fleet were left "working up" in Kiøge bay.



As a result of his investigations in Copenhagen he demanded urgently a number of gunboats of shallow draught to work among the shoals in the Gulf of Riga and inshore generally. He realized that without them the blockade was bound to be much reduced in efficiency; indeed, there were already signs that the Russians were preparing to obtain supplies by the inshore route from Memel. Moreover without these craft it would be almost impossible to "get at" the enemy either in Kronstadt or in Sveaborg.

It was soon apparent that the Russians had no intention of leaving their ports and the protection of their mines so long as the British fleet was anywhere in the vicinity. Their strategy, as the First Lord wrote to the C. in C., was "to wait and watch an opportunity in the hope that you will seriously cripple your force by knocking your head against their forts, when they may take you at a serious disadvantage and inflict a fatal blow." This being so, the scope for action was strictly limited. The first essential, as the First Lord outlined in a long despatch at the beginning of the war on the guiding strategy of the campaign, was "to feel your way and make good your hold in the Gulf of Finland . . . if you have no means except naval at your command you must pause long and consider well before you attempt any attack on the Russian squadron in their strongholds." The administration at home saw very well that the country would expect and clamour for some spectacular event and action in the Baltic; yet they repeatedly pressed Admiral Napier to do nothing reckless, reminding him that he must "not yield to some rash impulse and fail in the discharge of the noblest of all duties, which is the moral courage to do what you know to be right at the risk of being accused of having been wrong."

Acting largely in accordance with this strategy, the Baltic squadron moved to the entrance of the Gulf as soon as ice and weather conditions would allow. Fog hindered their movements, and the main body did not enter until 20th May. The lack of visibility appears to have been added to by the Newcastle coal which all the steamers, except the "Duke of Wellington," were burning, and which "made the channels scarcely distinguishable." Napier did, however, keep some sort of blockade going with a squadron off Hango from the beginning of April, and he used his frigates to survey and reconnoitre the Aland Islands.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>At this time the Aland islands belonged to Russia and were being fortified and garrisoned by her. Her main seaports were Sveaborg (the port of Helsinki) and Kronstadt, both of which are naturally defended by narrow and intricate channels lending themselves to the planting of "infernal machines" of which the Russians appear to have made considerable use. These mines seem to have been moored and some of them electrically controlled.

When Napier anchored off Hango his force consisted of twelve ships of the line. He had left eight more with Admiral Corry to maintain a watch on the Aland Islands. One object of this seems to have been to tempt the combined Russian fleets to attack him while he was still numerically weak, and as an added bait he seems to have contemplated attacking the fortress of Hango. Ultimately, however, he came to the conclusion that the fortress itself was not likely to be of sufficient value to the Russians to tempt them out, and the attack could only give him a fort of little value at the probable cost of a large number of lives and possibly ships.

Appreciating this, Napier left Hango alone and went on towards Sveaborg. At Kronstadt there were, he heard, 10,000 troops, 20 line-of-battle ships and a number of small craft. The battleships were moored in pairs under the guns of the fortress, commanding with their broadsides the narrow approach channels. The channels were full of mines.<sup>2</sup> The British, however, avoided trying their efficiency, and the longer they delayed the more mines there were to compete with. Russian production in April of 1854 had risen to the not very impressive figure of eleven a day, but there were sufficient mines laid by the middle of the year to make the close approach of warships exceedingly hazardous.

At Sveaborg the British fleet was reinforced by Admiral Parseval with a French squadron consisting of seven sailing ships of the line, one screw ship of the line, six sailing frigates, four steamers and one steam frigate. Control remained divided between the two Admirals: each was in charge of his own squadron only, but they were jointly responsible for the conduct of affairs. Fortunately, the Admirals seem to have agreed upon their actions well and there was no scandal afterwards concerning their lack of co-operation; but neither Napier nor Parseval

<sup>2</sup>Russian mines were reputed to contain 450 lbs. of powder encased in wood or iron. Inside the mines were glass pipes containing sulphuric acid. These pipes were packed around with a compound of "chlorate of potash, sugar, and sulphur." The glass pipes were broken by thick metallic wires or piston rods, which came out on top of the case through a stuffing box, and were then connected to levers which extended horizontally and moved under pressure from a ship's bottom. When the lever was depressed, the pipe was broken and the mine exploded.

The British method of sweeping these infernal machines was to send in shallow, flat-bottomed boats towing very long ropes and drags; the ropes passing over the levers exploded the mine, the sweepers themselves being sufficiently far away not to be damaged by the explosion.

Another type of Russian mine was electrically controlled, and the whole line exploded when a circuit driven off a battery was closed. A further variant of the electrically controlled mine was suspended from a buoy at about three feet below the surface of the water, and fired by remote control from the land. Experiments carried out with this on old ships were, it was said, very successful.

liked the arrangement, and Napier's biographer states that Sir Charles would willingly have acted as second-in-command.

With this reinforcement, both commanders felt that something ought to be done. Napier had by now established a close blockade of the Gulf of Finland, reconnoitred the Aland Islands and carried out a preliminary reconnaissance of Sveaborg.

Sir Charles' appreciation of the situation gave him three courses :

- (a) To content himself with the unadventurous policy of maintaining a strict blockade of the Gulf of Finland.
- (b) To run his head against the stone walls of Kronstadt and/or Sveaborg—an operation which in view of the shallowness of the approaches and the non-appearance of gunboats he considered impossible.
- (c) To attack the Aland Islands—without troops this might well have seemed a difficult operation, yet it was the course which Sir Charles would have preferred to take.

Admiral Parseval, however, thought differently. To attack the Aland Islands without troops was in his opinion too grave a task, and he persuaded Admiral Napier to reconnoitre Kronstadt, while the allied governments sent them an expeditionary force to attack Bomarsund—the capital of Aland. The governments concurred in these last proposals. The Crimean experience outside Sevastopol was providing confirmation of the uselessness of wooden walls against the power of "modern" artillery. The allies also agreed that the French should furnish troops, the British adding a comparatively small contingent and providing the transports.

Leaving behind them a squadron at the mouth of the Gulf to watch the Sveaborg forces and act as cover to Plumridge's forces who were still blockading and reconnoitring the Aland Islands and Gulf of Bothnia, the combined forces moved on towards Kronstadt. In spite of bad weather they arrived on 26th June, declared a blockade of St. Petersburg (Leningrad) and Kronstadt, and proceeded to carry out as much of a survey of the port as they could. As a result, the two Commanders-in-Chief merely formed the opinion that any attack was out of the question. The stone walls of the forts would be, they flatly declared, far too much for their ships. Napier did, however, state that with gunboats an attack would be practicable, but none having arrived there was no question of his putting his plan into action.

This lack of shallow draught vessels was handicapping him in almost every way. Not only did it make a successful offensive against Kronstadt

or Sveaborg impossible, but, in addition, it rendered the work of his blockading squadrons very ineffective: Russian and neutral trade slipped by in the shoals.

Having agreed that Kronstadt was too hard a nut to crack, the allied Admirals decided that nothing more could be done in that locality until the following year, and learning that the army was on its way, they decided to withdraw to the mouth of the Gulf to meet it. This move was later to be strongly and bitterly attacked in the House of Commons, but was generally upheld by most naval officers. Accordingly the combined fleets returned, concentrated with Admiral Corry's squadron at Helsingfors, and awaited the arrival of the transports and Sir James Graham's instructions on the attack.

Throughout the whole campaign there appears to have been an endeavour to fight the war from Whitehall. The first result of any independent action by Sir Charles Napier was almost invariably a highly critical and slightly querulous letter from their Lordships who would seldom allow, until a few more despatches had passed and the move appeared a success, that the Admiral's action was justified. But public opinion at home, critical of apparent inaction and the inability of the allied forces to "get at" Russia, was demanding some tangible success; and the Government, agreeing with the Admirals on the spot that the only reasonably sure way of achieving this was by capturing the Aland Islands, had been obliged, slightly grudgingly, to send out the necessary military force and reinforcements.

Sir Charles now strengthened Admiral Plumridge's squadron with the addition of two steamers and ordered a tightening up of the blockade so as to prevent enemy reinforcements arriving. Ships were also sent to meet the transports and escort them through the Baltic.

About this time the Government began to conceive that something might be done against Sveaborg: a conception which seems to have been partly based on the belief that with the fall of Aland Islands Sweden would also come into the war. But such a belief was an entirely wishful reading of the Swedish views on the war. That nation was far too cautious to become embroiled unless there was a possibility of a very large gain and one which they would be able to maintain without later on having to fight an isolated war.

In the middle of July the fleets left Helsingfors and proceeded to the Aland Islands. Admiral Corry had just been invalided home and Commodore Martin had taken command of his squadron which was still watching the mouth of the Gulf of Finland. Meanwhile, Plumridge and his squadron which had been blockading Bomarsund rejoined the

flag. While the fleet awaited the transports, light craft were employed carrying out a general reconnaissance of the approaches to Bomarsund and Abo. In the course of these operations several frigates grounded, but fortunately received only minor damage. The Russians, taking this activity as a sign of an impending attack, made their own preparations for immediate defence, burning all the combustible material and clearing away generally.

According to Sir Charles Napier's intelligence, the enemy had in the Aland Islands a force of 2,000 troops, most of which was concentrated at Bomarsund. That island was fortified with iron-roofed casemates, and two tiers of guns were implaced within. Their angle of training however was limited, which prevented them concentrating all their fire on any one spot. It had the advantage, however, of allowing few shot to enter. The concentration on any one ship, in the opinion of the Royal Engineer officer who assisted in the reconnaissance, was, however, as high as thirty. But, in order to do any damage to the masonry of the forts, the ships would have to be at very close range, and at those ranges they would in addition to the fire of the main forts (fifty to sixty guns was the official estimate) have to face heavy cross fire from the flanking towers. The opinion of Captain Sullivan—the officer responsible for the survey—was that "an attack by ships would be attended with a loss too great to warrant the attack."

Detailed arrangements were accordingly made to land the troops: the marines of both fleets in the North, and the French troops on two beaches to the South-West of Bomarsund, close by the West Tower. The French and their heavy artillery arrived on 5th August and were transferred to the steamers from which it was intended to land them on the 7th. The following day the landing took place.

The marines' landing was, unexpectedly, unopposed: due perhaps to the false confidence of the Russians in the protection afforded them by shoals. Advancing immediately, they captured two masked batteries which were still being constructed, sited so as to command the main road. The Southern landing was equally successful and the ports were formally invested. The operation was covered by a bombardment of a seven-gun battery in advance of the "great" fort by a French and British steamer which was so successful that boats from the fleets were able to land under its cover and spike the guns.

The following day guns and stores were landed and batteries set up as much as four-and-a-half miles inland. The guns were dragged into position by barefooted sailors—barefooted, it may be noted, not from choice, but because the contractors had supplied shoes which were too small for 90 per cent. of them.



On the 10th the "Penelope" ran ashore under the guns of the main fort. The Russians fired at her mainly with red-hot shot. These were intended to set the wooden ships on fire, but were easily dealt with by sailors picking them up on a shovel and placing them on top of the heaps of cold shot waiting to be fired; there they burnt themselves out harmlessly. Eventually the "Penelope" got off by jettisoning her guns.

The operation continued almost in advance of schedule, and the fortress surrendered scarcely a week after the attack had begun. Under heavy fire Russian morale was kept up by recourse to the bottle. So much "Dutch courage" was imbibed on one occasion that they were incapable of resisting any attack on their fort.

Bomarsund having been captured, two problems confronted the Allies: one, which was chiefly political, was what to do with the Åland Islands now that they were captured; the other, which was chiefly strategical, was what to do next. The first move was an effort to persuade Sweden to occupy and garrison the Islands. But Sweden's idea of strict neutrality was that this would be an act of hostility against Russia, and the offer was declined. It was then suggested that the French should garrison them throughout the winter, but they, too, refused; so eventually it was decided to blow up the fortifications. The troops were embarked on 3rd September, and a squadron under the command of Admiral Martin, who had been relieved of his guard of the Gulf of Finland by Admiral Plumridge, was left to complete the task of demolition.

The second problem—what to do next, still remained unanswered. Instructions from home directed that arrangements were to be made for the gradual withdrawal of the fleet from the Baltic, and suggesting that the sailing ships and block ships should be sent first. Napier, however, thought that Åbo, which was reported to contain 10,000 Russian troops, might be attacked, and sent Captain Scott with four ships to reconnoitre the port. This officer, in spite of navigational mishaps (at one time or another each of his ships went aground), proceeded to within 3,000 yards of the port. He reported that the harbour was closed by two booms; the outer one consisted of chains suspended from a floating platform, and the inner a miscellaneous collection of stakes and booms between which were stationed shallow-draught gunboats. Covering the approaches were a number of masked batteries, some of which were equipped with guns of, for those days, long range. Nevertheless, he viewed favourably the possibility of an attack, and Napier endeavoured to persuade the French to co-operate. But the French General appears to have refused to make the attempt, partly because of the cholera which had broken out among his troops, and

partly because of the bad weather—heavy gales being frequent. Accordingly, the allied commanders decided that nothing more could be done, and they started to send home those ships which were not immediately required for the close blockade of the Gulf of Finland.

The next month was a period of indecisions. The public was by no means satisfied with the apparently easy capture of Bomarsund; some newspapers pointed to the small losses in killed and wounded. The Admiralty, therefore, sought to push Napier into some further enterprise before the forces were withdrawn. The French General—Buraguay D'Hillieur, expressed a wish to visit the approaches to Sveaborg in person, in order to appreciate the force required for an attack the following year. After the visit, General Jones—the British adviser on engineering, produced a minority report suggesting that now was the time for attacking, and that an operation of a week or thereabouts might effectively destroy Sveaborg; but his scheme called for a supply of mortars and rockets which the fleet did not possess, and it seems to have been based on inadequate intelligence about the strength of the garrison. The French emphatically disagreed, and shortly afterwards their army sailed for Cherbourg. Nevertheless, the Admiralty began to badger the C.-in-C. to take more notice of General Jones's plan, and even suggested that he might undertake some attempt against Sveaborg without the army. Both the naval commanders, however, declined to play, and began sending their ships home. Eventually, Admiral Parseval put an end to the discussions by sailing for France with the rest of his fleet. At the same time the Admiralty reinforced Sir Charles Napier with his first gunboat!

Slowly the rest of the British fleet was sent home, in spite of a continued undertone from the Admiralty suggesting that perhaps something could yet be done. Finally, when the Gulf of Finland was really iced up, the last ships returned from the Baltic and Napier anchored at Spithead on 16th December to begin an exceedingly undignified quarrel with Their Lordships in general, and Sir John Graham in particular, concerning the conduct of the campaign.

On the whole, all that could have been done in the Baltic was done: the blockade had been effective and the Aland Islands had been captured, thus relieving the Russian strategic hold over the Gulf of Bothnia. But Sir Charles Napier had promised more; public opinion had expected him to be as good as his word and, moreover, required more action than was apparent in this war which to a large extent they had foisted on the better judgment of the Ministers in power. The campaign showed how difficult it is for a force to distinguish itself when its supremacy is believed to be undisputed. It also showed the potential defensive possibilities

of the mine, and the futility of naval action against fortresses and ports. The only chance of spectacular success lay in co-operation with the Army; even so, to attack a fortified port is a futile project unless it is completely successful. To re-embark defeated troops under the heavy guns of the enemy is a difficult enough operation in these days of power boats; but in the days of oars and sail it would have been, virtually, a massacre.

Sir Charles himself was a curious character—arrogant, boastful, conceited and yet almost always dirty, badly dressed and ill kempt. He was growing old (and he himself had written of the evils of old age in high command) and had possibly lost some of the dash that had earned him a reputation as one of the most dashing of frigate Captains. He was a "political" Admiral, and political capital was made out of the campaign by his political opponents. The Press, also, had for the first time some real power over the conduct of the war, and irresponsible junior officers, not in full possession of the facts, were frequently given publicity by the progenitors of a "cheap" Press. This might have been bad for the morale of the fleet, for to be successful a C-in-C. must be above professional reproach. That it does not appear to have had any great effect was probably due to the fact that news travelled slowly in those days.

The Crimean war as a whole is interesting since it marks the beginnings of many modern problems. It was a war of transition; in many ways a war of democracy: public and political opinions began to play their parts, propaganda began to raise its head, and the land began to have a greater influence over the sea—an influence which has tended to increase as guns obtain longer range and the striking power of aircraft against ships develops. Control of sea communication still facilitates strategy and will always do so, but control of the sea close to enemy territory is becoming increasingly difficult for strictly "naval" forces. The Crimean War, and especially the Baltic campaign, was, it is suggested, a warning of this coming restriction.

## THE CORPS OF THE WHITE COCKADE

By LIEUT.-COLONEL M. E. S. LAWS, M.C., R.A.

GENERAL de Gaulle has publicly announced that no undue pressure will be brought to bear on any Frenchman in England to join the Free French forces now being organized in Great Britain to continue the struggle against Germany. French soldiers and sailors in Britain have been given a free choice of joining General de Gaulle or of returning to France, and already a number have been repatriated. It is probable that the General, who is a keen student of history, has not forgotten the fate of a previous French army raised in Britain nearly a century and a half ago, for in that case the penalty of not confining enlistment to volunteers was a disaster of the first magnitude.

In 1793, La Vendée broke out into open revolt against the National Assembly in Paris. The peasantry of Western France were strongly royalist in sympathy and objected to the anti-religious policy adopted by the Republicans. Though at first the rebels, who were generally known as *Chouans*, won considerable local successes over the ill-equipped Republican troops, their leaders soon realized that there could be no reasonable hope of ultimate victory without military aid from abroad. They therefore applied to the British Government for regular troops, artillery and equipment. The authorities in London promised help and arranged for a small expedition under Lord Moira to land on the French coast in order to gain contact with the Royalists. Accompanying this force was a number of French Royalist officers, mostly of the artillery and engineers. For various reasons, the British expedition arrived late at the rendezvous to find that the Royalists had been defeated and driven back from the coast. Lord Moira therefore returned to Spithead, where his force was broken up. The French Royalist officers, however, were still anxious to aid the *Chouans*, and the Duc d'Harcourt applied to the British Government with further suggestions.

After some discussion, and chiefly owing to the insistence of Mr. Windham, Secretary of State at War, the British Government agreed to raise a number of French troops in England for the British service. It was necessary to pass a special Act of Parliament to legalize this proceeding, and the House of Commons insisted on certain safeguards being inserted. Thus the foreign troops were only to be accommodated within ten miles of the coast, were limited to 5,000 in number, and were to be subject to the British Articles of War and the Mutiny Act. The King was specially authorised to grant commissions to foreign officers in

these regiments. The units raised under this authority were collectively known as "The Corps of the White Cockade" to distinguish them from "The Black Cockade Corps" raised on the Continent by the Duke of York. By agreement with the Duc d'Harcourt, the terms of service for these French regiments were arranged as far as possible to conform to those in force in the French Royal Army prior to the outbreak of the revolution. The units were, however, to be part of the British Army, paid, clothed and equipped by the British Government. Officers were to be nominated by the Colonel and approved by King George, but it was stipulated that no officer was to be appointed in a rank higher than that which he had held in the French royal service. It was intended that French officers should serve in one rank lower than that which they had held in France, but in practice many majors served as subalterns. A curious provision was also made by which *émigré* officers took seniority within their French units according to the date of their commissions in the French Royal Army, but when serving with British officers their seniority was decided by the date of their British commissions. As a concession to the impoverished state of the majority of the *émigrés*, the usual fees levied on the grant of a commission were waived.

#### DETAILS OF ORGANIZATION

It was originally intended that the French contingent should consist of two half-battalions of artillery and eight two-battalion regiments of infantry. One half-battalion of artillery (Lieut.-Colonel de Quiesseville's) was to man the battalion guns (four guns per regiment), while the other (Lieut.-Colonel de Rotalier's) was to man the guns of the Park (*i.e.*, the heavier pieces). Actually, however, Colonel de Quiesseville's unit was never recruited, being left as a collection of officers whom it was hoped would form the nucleus of an artillery regiment formed from the *Chouans* in France. Lieut.-Colonel de Rotalier's unit, the French Emigrant Artillery, was raised in England and consisted of H.Q. and four companies, complete with horses and drivers. In addition, a small cadre of engineer officers was formed and named the French Emigrant Engineers. Of the eight infantry regiments, three were to be raised in England—those of Comte d'Hervilly, Marquis du Dresnay and Comte d'Hector. The remaining five—those of Comte d'Autichamp, Duc de Castries, Duc de Mortemart, Duc de Montmorency-Laval, and Comte de Viomenil—were to be raised on the Continent, mostly in North Germany. Of those raised on the Continent, only de Castries's and de Mortemart's Regiments ever raised an appreciable number of men and survived: the others were marched in September, 1795, to the shores of Lake Constance, where they were disbanded. Most of the N.C.Os. and men were drafted into the Prince de Condé's *émigré* army or were



incorporated into the Second Battalion of Dillon's Regiment, which was in process of forming for the British service. It should be noted that the Regiments of the "White Cockade" were raised on different terms of service to those foreign units (known as the Corps of "The Black Cockade") raised on the Continent on the authority of the Duke of York.

Letters of Service authorising recruiting for the French regiments of the White Cockade were issued early in August, 1794. The regiments raised in England established depots as under :—

Comte d'Hervilly's Regiment :—Lyndhurst, Hants.

Marquis du Dresnay's Regiment :—Jersey.

Comte d'Hector's Regiment :—Cowes, I.O.W., and later Lyminster, Hants.

French Emigrant Artillery :—Lyndhurst : later Christchurch, Hants.

The British Government paid the Colonel levy money of £3 10s. a head for every soldier accepted, this sum being intended to pay all expenses incurred in bringing the recruit to the depot. It was intended that clothing should be provided by the Colonel, but eventually it was found by the Government since the French *émigrés* had no financial resources or credit. Arms were provided by the Board of Ordnance and medicine chests by the Apothecary-General. The cost of the bread and meat rations was issued to Colonels, who thus became responsible for feeding their men. The British Government undertook to provide barrack accommodation and an allowance sufficient to procure coal and candles. There was no difficulty in finding officers for the new regiments, for thousands of *émigrés* had reached England from France. It was quite a different matter when it came to filling the ranks, for the foreign regiments then being raised for the Austrian and Dutch service absorbed many Frenchmen, while others joined the Prince de Condé's *émigré* army in Germany. The nucleus of the French Emigrant Artillery was, however, obtained by enlisting the seamen from six French royalist warships which reached Spithead in the summer of 1794 from the Mediterranean. These vessels had joined Lord Hood's squadron at Toulon in December, 1793, and had accompanied the British Fleet during the campaign in Corsica after the evacuation of Toulon. Most of the crews were naval ratings, who enlisted readily in the French Emigrant Artillery when their ships were laid up at Portsmouth. Another regiment (Comte d'Hervilly's) received the remnants of the *Régiment Royal Louis* which had been formed at Toulon for the British service and which had later fought well in Corsica. About three hundred rank and file and a few officers came to Britain with the French warships and were drafted into d'Hervilly's Regiment, which was later

unofficially known as *Royal Louis*. Comte d'Hector's Regiment, recruited only French sailors and was officered entirely by French-naval officers, being known unofficially as the *Regiment Marine Royale*. Marquis du Dresnay's Regiment collected a number of French fishermen from the Channel Islands, but had great difficulty in filling its ranks.

#### RECRUITMENT OF PRISONERS OF WAR

In order to complete these regiments to establishment, which by the terms of their agreement had to be accomplished within three months, the Colonels sent out recruiting parties and obtained permission to enlist French prisoners of war from British prisons. At first there was much competition between regimental recruiters, and allegations of bribery of prison guards were freely made. Eventually a system was organized by which a sort of combined mission visited each prison in turn. The recruiting officers, who understood English, were disguised as clerks and were placed in the prison office to which selected French prisoners of war were brought in turn for interrogation by a prison officer. If the prisoner appeared by his demeanour and answers to questions not to be of strongly republican sympathy, he was enlisted and sent off to join one of the *émigré* regiments. In theory, such enlistments were entirely voluntary, and it probably required little effort to persuade a French prisoner to exchange the discomfort and monotony of life in a prison for the career of a soldier in the royalist cause. From contemporary records it seems clear that by this unusual method a number of perfectly reliable recruits, mostly sailors, were obtained. Others were probably very lukewarm in their royalist sympathies, and a few were convinced republicans, who saw in enlistment merely an opportunity to desert and to return to France. Yet while the *émigré* regiments of the White Cockade remained in England, desertion was not serious. On the Continent, the White Cockade Regiments, recruited from prisoners of war, but with fewer precautions, paid the penalty by having a very high desertion rate. In some cases French prisoners were frankly bought from the Austrians, the usual rate being a guinea a head, leaving a fair profit to the Colonel from the £3 10s. levy money. Despite these efforts, not a single White Cockade Regiment—except the French Emigrant Artillery—recruited up to full strength within the specified time, and in fact the infantry regiments in England never completed their first battalions. The second battalions were not raised at all, except d'Hervilly's Regiment, which raised a second battalion at Quiberon in July, 1795.

In view of the shortage of rank and file and of the surplus officers, approval was given for the formation of companies of nobles attached to Comte d'Hector's and Marquis du Dresnay's Regiments. These nobles,

who were called "volunteers," were paid 1s. a day, and were armed and equipped as the rank and file, though they were given better quality uniforms. They were whenever possible given separate barrack accommodation. It is probable that they were enrolled merely to provide them with food and shelter rather than with a view to their employment on the battlefield as units; but it was hoped that when the White Cockade regiments landed in France, the "volunteers" of these "Officer companies" would be employed as officers for the new *Chouan* levies and to replace casualties in the commissioned ranks of the regular *emigré* regiments. Later these companies were expanded into four regiments each of four companies.

#### THE LANDING AT QUIBERON BAY

While the White Cockade regiments were being formed, the British Government was preparing plans for an invasion of France. The general command of the expedition was given to Comte Joseph de Puisaye, but the Comte d'Hervilly was entrusted with the command of the White Cockade regiments in British pay. This dual control proved a serious mistake, for the two commanders quarrelled unceasingly. De Puisaye was a diplomat rather than a soldier, while d'Hervilly, though personally brave, was a hide-bound and tactless regimental officer with an undisguised contempt for the *Chouans* and all irregular troops. In mid-June, 1795, the French Emigrant Engineers and Artillery, together with the infantry regiments of d'Hervilly, du Dresnay, d'Hector and Comte de la Chatre (a "Black Cockade" corps recently arrived from Germany) embarked at Spithead and sailed for France under the escort of a British naval squadron. After a stormy passage, the troops disembarked in Quiberon Bay, under the protection of a force of *Chouans*, and started to land immense quantities of arms, clothing, ammunition and equipment. Thousands of Royalists hastened to join the expedition and it was clear that the Republicans had been taken by surprise. It was known that another division of *emigré* troops of the Black Cockade was on its way from Germany to join de Puisaye, and bold offensive action would undoubtedly have rallied the whole of Western France to the royalist cause. But Comte d'Hervilly refused to support the *Chouans* with his regular troops, and proceeded with maddening deliberation to land the enormous quantity of stores from the transports. The *Chouans*, after a few minor successes, soon came up against Republican troops who were rapidly being concentrated by General Hoche, and, lacking artillery, were gradually driven back. Comte d'Hervilly then captured the small Fort Penthièvre on the Quiberon peninsula without serious opposition, and proceeded to transfer his stores and baggage

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to the peninsula, which he proposed to organise as a base. Of the prisoners captured in Fort Penthievre, over two hundred were enlisted on the spot in d'Hervilly's Regiment.

#### THE REPUBLICAN COUNTER-STROKE

While the Royalists were still unloading stores on the Quiberon peninsula, the Republicans were concentrating their scattered troops, and soon drove in the *Chouans* until the whole of the invading force had taken refuge on the peninsula behind the fort. General Hoche at once entrenched a position covering the only exit from the peninsula. On the night of 16th July, royalist reinforcements under Comte de Sombreuil arrived from Germany. This division consisted of the Black Cockade infantry regiments of Comte de Béon, Comte de Damas, Duc de Rohan, Comte de Perigord and Prince de Salm. The first two of these were veteran battalions, which had fought two campaigns in the Dutch service, and all were composed of Frenchmen or Germans. On disembarking at Quiberon, Comte de Sombreuil discovered that Comte d'Hervilly had arranged to attack the enemy's entrenchments that night. In vain he suggested a postponement of the operation to allow his troops to take part. Comte d'Hervilly was obstinate and launched his attack soon after midnight. The enemy were, however, on the alert, and the attacking troops were met with a terrible enfilade artillery fire and were repulsed with very heavy losses. All accounts agree that the units fought gallantly, especially the artillery and Comte de la Chatre's Regiment which covered the retreat to the peninsula. The losses in officers was particularly severe and Comte d'Hervilly himself was mortally wounded. From that moment the morale of the Royalists deteriorated rapidly, and men deserted by scores at a time. The troops realised that they had been poorly led and Comte de Puisaye was not the man to restore confidence. On the night of 21st July, in pouring rain, the Republicans, with amazing audacity, rushed Fort Penthievre, the storming parties being guided by deserters. Some men of d'Hervilly's Regiment in the fort shot their officers and joined the Republicans, and by dawn the fort and the artillery park was in the hands of the enemy.

Comte de Puisaye appears to have failed to take any action and it was left to Comte de Sombreuil to rally the Royalists. At first the counter-attack made good progress, but du Dresnay's and d'Hervilly's Regiments suddenly gave way and the Royalists were gradually driven back towards the seaward end of the peninsula. Here they made a stand, but, being short of ammunition, de Sombreuil eventually accepted General Humbert's offer of quarter and surrendered. The General's terms were later repudiated by the authorities in Paris and over seven

hundred of the *émigré* nobles who capitulated were shot. This disaster practically wiped out the regiments engaged. The remnants of the nine infantry regiments were drafted into the Comte de la Chatre's Regiment, which, together with the Engineers and Artillery, were reformed on the Isle d'Yeu. In December, 1795, these units returned to Southampton and next year were sent out to join General Stewart's army in Portugal. At the peace of 1802 all three corps were sent back to England and were disbanded. The officers received gratuities and the men were given free passage to their homes on the Continent. The infantry regiments of de Castries and de Mortemart, which had also served in Portugal, were disbanded at the same time.

The experiment of raising *émigré* troops in England had failed. How far the failure was due to the enlistment of prisoners of war is difficult to estimate, but it is possible that with inspiring leadership even such doubtful recruits could have been made into good soldiers. Indeed, it is not too much to say that competent leadership of true volunteers might in July, 1795, have achieved a decisive victory which would have changed the history of Europe.

## THE WORK OF THE N.A.A.F.I. ENTERTAINMENT BRANCH

By CLAUDE F. LUKE

**I**N the first twelve months of war over seven million sailors, soldiers and airmen at home and overseas attended the various entertainments controlled by the Entertainment Branch of the Navy, Army and Air Force Institutes. In France alone nearly two-and-a-quarter million men and women of the B.E.F. and auxiliary services were entertained by 5,420 performances of all kinds. In all, some 39,000 performances—about 25,000 "living" performances and 14,000 cinema shows—have been provided by N.A.A.F.I. during the first year of war—an average of over one hundred entertainments a day throughout that period.

So much for the bare bones of a remarkable achievement. Such statistics, however, convey no hint of the myriad obstacles overcome, nor of the swift adaptations and readjustments of policy demanded by a war of inconceivable developments and transformations. They tell nothing of the rapid growth of an enterprise which began with a handful of enthusiasts and in twelve crowded months expanded into the largest organization for the provision of entertainment in the country, not excepting the B.B.C. To obtain even a sketchy survey of that development, it is necessary to glance back to the early days of September, 1939, when N.A.A.F.I. was suddenly called upon to organize and finance under war conditions a steady flow of all types of entertainment for a large and ever growing body of serving men and women. Happily the Institutes were not entirely new to the business for even in peacetime they were accustomed to spend some £30,000 a year on a service of entertainers for camps, barracks, and naval and air stations. Soon they were to be spending that sum, and more, in a month.

As soon as war appeared inevitable, Mr. Basil Dean, who for some months had been working on a scheme for the organization of professional entertainers in war-time, was appointed Director of Entertainments for N.A.A.F.I. A week after the outbreak of war, Drury Lane Theatre was taken over as headquarters of the Entertainment Branch. Not an hour was lost in adapting it for its urgent mission. At the outset, the entire organization comprised six men and a theatre. A skeleton staff was engaged and augmented week by week. The historic dressing rooms were rapidly stripped and equipped as offices. Sir Seymour Hicks moved into the room where Sheridan wrote "School for Scandal."

The leading lady's dressing room—the same where Nellie Gwynne, Sarah Siddons, Fanny Kemble and others of the Drury Lane pageant rested between calls—changed overnight into the publicity office. David Garrick's apartment was taken over by the N.A.A.F.I. "Theatre Control" section, while the famous Green Room, with Garrick's massive, gilt-framed mirror still intact upon the walls, did temporary duty as a store room. The stage itself became, and still remains, a general utility shop, a vast area where full-scale shows are rehearsed, dance ensembles tried out, auditions arranged, properties assembled, conferences held, pianos packed for dispatch, portable stages built, and various odd jobs of carpentry, electric wiring, microphone testing and hamper packing performed.

To-day Drury Lane Theatre houses upwards of 50 different sections, including departments concerned with films, broadcasting, dance bands, concert parties, stage designs, hospital entertainment, hostels and billeting, music, musical plays, passports, plays, revues, sing-songs, variety, transport and wardrobe. Including all grades, from directors and executives to typists, telephonists, car drivers, stage hands, messengers and cleaners, the Drury Lane personnel numbers 140—a moderate figure when it is considered that between them they devise, control, finance, equip and furnish transport for all N.A.A.F.I. entertainments, and maintain on the road an army of entertainers whose numbers fluctuate between 1,250 and 1,500. Altogether well over 7,000 individual artists have been employed.

So the organization has grown. But in those hurried, pioneering days of September, 1939, the pressing problem was to rush the first batch of entertainers to the troops with the minimum delay. Within a few days, several large-scale programmes were in rehearsal. Mr. Harold Holt was busy with a programme of 24 camp concerts. Jack Buchanan was planning 16 shows for the larger military theatres. Will Hay was building up the variety section. Leslie Henson was preparing to send out a West End company to play the famous "Green Room Rags." Ralph Reader's "Gang Show" was making ready for the road.

#### CONCERT PARTIES

And while these more ambitious plans took shape, an immediate supply of talent was found in the concert parties which, just then, were winding up their seaside seasons. As each returned to town, it was snapped up by N.A.A.F.I.'s concert party section, organized by Mr. Thorpe Bates and Mr. Greatrex Newman, and sent post haste to the remoter areas where troops were most in need of relaxation. Within a fortnight 12 concert parties of eight members each had been engaged,

rehearsed, equipped with transport and sent on tour. They travelled in special lorries equipped with a portable stage, curtains, flies, footlights, battens, spot-light, piano, microphone and switchboard. Electric current was supplied from the lorry. These travelling "fit ups" could be erected anywhere in an hour.

Within a month of the outbreak of war, some 500 shows had reached the troops. By the middle of November, no fewer than 650,000 men had attended nearly 1,500 N.A.A.F.I. shows of all kinds. The number of performances had reached 50 a day and was steadily rising, while over 700 professional artists were more or less continuously employed. In addition, a fleet of mobile cinema units toured the country and in a single week played in 78 different centres to a total audience of 50,000 men.

Meanwhile the building or adaptation of permanent theatres in the larger military concentrations was already in hand. Weekly shows, arranged by Mr. George Black, were also given at the Royal Artillery Theatre, Woolwich. The Hospital section, under the guidance of Miss Lilian Braithwaite, Dame Sybil Thorndike and Miss Naomi Jacob, had made a start with weekly concerts at Netley and the Royal Herbert Hospital, Woolwich. In ten short weeks, therefore, considerable progress had been made and the organization set on a solid foundation. In that brief experience, various important factors had emerged. One prime lesson was the essential need for mobility. Gone were the days of the Great War when large and more or less static concentrations were the rule; to-day troop entertainers had to become literally camp followers with a speed of movement to match the troops', and with an organization so fluid as to adapt itself to the swiftly-changing positions of the serving men. The ever-present fear at Drury Lane in those early days was that an entertainment would reach an area only to find that the audience had moved on!

#### SING-SONG GROUPS

That this was a war of comparatively small concentrations, at the outset at least, was a discovery vitally affecting entertainments policy. One major problem soon presented itself—how to cater for the many remote units and small isolated groups beyond the reach of the usual entertainments. This difficulty was happily met by the creation of a number of "sing-song" parties, each composed of four professionals—usually two men and two women—all of whom could play one or more instruments. One such group, for instance, could play twenty-eight. These travelling quartettes were provided with N.A.A.F.I. vans, just large enough to accommodate the players and a piano, with one of the



entertainers driving. To ensure variety, each party would tour an area for a month or so and then be transferred to another command. Throughout the worst winter in memory these modern troubadours travelled around the outlying areas giving excellent two- and three-hour performances to audiences of sometimes a score, occasionally several hundreds. They played in drill halls when they were well off, and in huts, garages, barns and cow sheds when they were not. The snow and ice of January and February often delayed but never deterred them. In the worst of the bad weather, one party made an epic trip from Morecambe to Plymouth—they took *eight days* on the journey and were overturned twice! Each sing-song group has four changes of programme, often gives two shows a day, and works seven days a week. At present there are upwards of twenty of these free-and-easy units on the road and their vans have registered a total travelling distance of nearly 400,000 miles.

For even smaller bodies of troops, such as balloon barrage and anti-aircraft units, there is a service of twenty-five accordion players. These modern minstrels go out singly, often playing to audiences of a score or less. They provide a two-hour entertainment of singing and dancing on thoroughly informal lines;—they encourage items from the men, arrange entire programmes of local talent, and generally assist the men to entertain themselves. In a recent week, the twenty-five accordionists, among whom are six girls, entertained 10,000 men, all in small units.

#### WITH THE B.E.F.

The organization for France was similar to that for the home forces. Here again mobility was the watchword. Travelling cinema units—with F.E.N.S.A. (Films Entertainments National Service Association), counterpart of E.N.S.A., looking after the supply of films—were the first to reach the B.E.F. "Living" entertainment had to wait a little longer for permission from G.H.Q., but by the middle of November this was obtained, and the first memorable show, including Gracie Fields, Sir Seymour Hicks, Claire Luce and Denis Noble, was recruited within twenty-four hours of the G.H.Q. order. From then on a steady flow of entertainment was maintained, with all-male casts in the forward areas and mixed shows at the bases. Film units penetrated as far as the Maginot Line itself. Eventually a total of 450 shows a week throughout the B.E.F. was achieved.

The full story of that adventure is beyond the scope of this brief account. Problems of transport and billeting, ice-bound roads, military restrictions, spy scares, air raids, epidemics—all these and more were overcome with indomitable good humour, as on the occasion, during

the bad weather, when Leslie Henson and Mai Bacon left with a party by rail from Amiens to go to Lille. There was no food on the train, and at Laon Miss Bacon alighted and raided the buffet for an armful of ham rolls. When she returned the train was already out of sight. She carried her troubles and ham rolls to the signalman, who, with Gallic chivalry, said: "For you, Mademoiselle, we will bring it back"—and he did: the train was stopped seven miles away and reversed to Laon, where Miss Bacon boarded it to the hungry cheers of her party.

The organization of entertainments in France was on a scale and of a character without precedent in war history. Its operations were controlled on military lines; and this was fortunate, for when the "flap" occurred and evacuation at short notice became necessary, a scheme known as the "Z" plan, which had been worked out in detail the previous November, was instantly ordered and carried out with complete success. The order to evacuate all entertainment personnel was given at 10.0 a.m. on the morning of the break-through. By 2.0 p.m. on the following day all those concerned were safely at the pre-arranged points of embarkation. The whole entertainment force, numbering some 217 artists, was evacuated without a single casualty, breakdown or loss of baggage. The cinema unit drivers also did admirable work. They travelled throughout the bad weather, often giving between them sixteen shows a night, and in all that period suffered only three accidents.

The evacuation from France enabled the Drury Lane executives to develop the organization in the Home Commands. At present the entertainment provided falls into well-defined groups. First there are the thirty garrison theatres serving the big concentrations. Twenty-one of these were built by the military authorities and equipped by N.A.A.F.I. with such items as stage, scenery, lighting and microphones. The remaining nine buildings were adapted by N.A.A.F.I. from existing accommodation—usually large huts or hangars which have been furnished with seating, stage, bars and cinematograph equipment. The largest of these "permanent" theatres has a capacity of 1,250; several hold 1,000 and 750, while the smallest will accommodate 483. These provide a Grade A Circuit for full-scale shows, including—as these words are written—companies playing "George and Margaret," "The Late Christopher Bean," "Night Must Fall," "When We are Married," and a revue with an all-female cast called "Girls in Uniform." The Vic-Wells Ballet and Opera Companies, the Liverpool Repertory Company, John Gielgud, Beatrice Lillie and Ivy St. Helier in Noel Coward plays, two variety companies and three full-scale concert parties are all booked on this tour.

### THE ROYAL AIR FORCE

Then there are the very large number of R.A.F. stations served by N.A.A.F.I., of which many are included in the Grade A Circuit. The others are provided for by smaller companies, concert party troupes, sing-song units and accordionists. Most of the R.A.F. theatres are converted hangars, seating audiences ranging from 400 to 1,250. In their conversion, bad acoustics raised a problem which N.A.A.F.I.'s Equipment Division, under Lt.-Colonel Bell, overcame by draping broad bunting in wide scallops from the roof. Many R.A.F. units prefer to put on their own shows, with a plentiful sprinkling of local and topical allusions. In these cases, the Institutes co-operate by sending down a qualified stage manager-producer who advises on production and takes rehearsals. He is invariably armed with a bagful of music, gags and sketches—given free by well-known writers and composers—which can be adapted to the squadron's intimate requirements. Similarly, if desired, local units may obtain curtains, timber, seating and other equipment from N.A.A.F.I. with which to construct or adapt their own buildings and stages. "Anything from a bag of nails to a West End musical, comedy" is Drury Lane's boast.

The cinema service is of special value to scattered units, making no demand on local accommodation or equipment. The films can be shown indoors or in the open, in any hut or hangar, or under canvas. There are at present 55 cinema units on the road—soon to be increased—giving about 600 shows a week. Each unit is self-contained and independent of outside lighting or transport. It consists of a van with a trained operator and driver, carries its own films, projector, screen, sound equipment, lighting and power, and can provide a two-hour show for a dozen men on an anti-aircraft post or for a 1,000 men in camp with equal ease.

### THE HOSPITAL SECTION

Sing-song parties, concert parties, solo accordionists, lecturers, conjurers—all these continue to be available as and when required. The Hospital Section has already provided 550 concerts in 36 different military hospitals in London and some 30 provincial hospitals have been visited in recent months. Five touring companies are distributed in the various commands, touring each for a month; the parties consist of two singers, an instrumentalist, a conjurer, a soubrette and a comedian-compère. Miss Braithwaite stresses the fact that these entertainments are free to the hospitals, and it is entirely a matter for the hospitals themselves to say how many shows they shall receive. The entertain-

ments can be given in the wards, or any nearby hall. Where patients include foreign nationals, songs and items in their native tongue are included.

In addition to hospital concerts, all sing-song shows are free; all accordion entertainments are free, and all shows under canvas, of whatever kind, are given without charge to the troops. In other cases the prices of admission are a shilling, sixpence and threepence.

Other spheres of N.A.A.F.I.—E.N.S.A. activity include the Middle East where a complete service of entertainment is organized under the charge of the R.A.S.C., and a similar organization for the Expeditionary Force in Iceland. Both places are provided with "living" and cinema entertainment. In the Middle East also, N.A.A.F.I. provides a regular broadcasting service, and all the popular "E.N.S.A. Half Hours," known to B.B.C. listeners, are recorded and sent out there. The programmes also include American broadcasts—complete half-hour programmes—arranged under the chairmanship of Gertrude Lawrence.

At home, a more recent development has been the provision of E.N.S.A. entertainments in factories and air-raid shelters. Fifty parties are at present performing in the factories—over 3,000 performances have so far been given—and the number is likely to be increased by arrangement with the Ministry of Labour with which this section of E.N.S.A. is closely linked. The entertainments in air-raid shelters were the result of a suggestion from Toynbee Hall, and so successful were they that the service is likely to spread, not only in London but also to provincial cities. It should be noted these entertainments do not involve any diversion of N.A.A.F.I. funds. Shows for the munition workers are financed direct by the Ministry of Labour who pay not only all the expenses incurred for salaries, travelling and other incidentals, but also a proper proportion of overhead expenditure. Similarly, air-raid shelter entertainments are charged to the authorities, civic or philanthropic, which sponsor them. Indeed, throughout the Drury Lane organization every item of expenditure is jealously watched to ensure that the soldier receives full value for his money. Lavish spending is taboo. Everyone cheerfully works either voluntarily or at cut rates. Famous artists receive two guineas a show for which, in normal times, their fee would be ten or twenty times as much. In the whole of the Entertainments Branch, indeed, only the lower paid ranks—the typists, messengers, cleaners and stage hands, receive wages comparable to their peace-time earnings. In all the offices at Drury Lane hang printed notices: "Save Light; Save Fuel; Save Waste—You Are Spending The Soldiers' Money," and that is the spirit permeating the entire enterprise.

From its inception, the organization has been a happy co-operation of the two bodies, N.A.A.F.I. and E.N.S.A. (Entertainments National Service Association), and later of the three bodies, N.A.A.F.I., E.N.S.A., and F.E.N.S.A. (films). The N.A.A.F.I. controls, finances and organizes. E.N.S.A., under the control of Sir Seymour Hicks, has no funds of its own but provides through its various committees and roster of entertainers a steady flow of living entertainment; while F.E.N.S.A. sees to it that the Cinema Division, under the control of Mr. Ben Henry, is enabled to give the troops all the best and most up-to-date films.

#### THE COMMAND ENTERTAINMENT OFFICER

And how, it may be asked, is a unit to avail itself of the entertainments at headquarters? By what machinery does the remote A.A. battery or R.A.F. station make its requirements known? The process is simple. Each of the Home Commands has a Command Entertainment Officer. At certain intervals he will receive from N.A.A.F.I. entertainment headquarters a month's allocation of entertainment available for his Command: so many concert parties, cinema units, lecturers, sing-song groups, solo accordionists, and so on comprise his share for the month. He then allots a proportion of these to each of his areas. It is then the duty of the areas entertainment officers—about 30 for the entire country—to distribute this allotment and arrange routes to meet the needs of the various units in the area. Thus any unit desiring a show should normally apply to its area entertainment officer; if that does not produce the necessary response, or if a unit feels that it is being neglected, it can make direct application to the Drury Lane headquarters where any such request will receive the most sympathetic consideration.



## INTERNATIONAL SITUATION.

### STOCKTAKING

**P**ERIODICAL stocktaking is necessary in every business. The biggest business in the world to-day is this war, and it has reached a stage when we may with advantage examine the assets and liabilities of ourselves and our enemies and see how they balance.

### GERMANY

*Assets.*—On the face of it, Germany has been piling up the credit side of her account ever since the War started. At the outset she had three opponents—Britain, France and Poland; she has disposed of two of them. Because they were needful to her strategical plans, she over-ran Norway, Holland and Belgium without any very serious resistance; Denmark, Rumania and Bulgaria succumbed to political and military threats.

The acquisition of Western Europe from the North Cape to the Bay of Biscay has given our principal enemy advantages which we cannot possibly ignore.

It has long been one of our maxims of defence that, because it is one of our most vital arteries, the English Channel must never be threatened by the Low Countries or the French Coast falling into unfriendly hands. In the last war the occupation of Belgium was bad enough, but the tide of the German advance was stayed so that at any rate the Channel ports of France were safe. But to-day the enemy's air, submarine and invasion bases line the whole of the Eastern and Southern waters of Britain. Hostile aircraft can take off within half-an-hour's flight of London. North Sea and Dover barrages would be of no avail, for U boats can operate from ports far removed from the narrow seas which formerly we mined and patrolled so successfully; or they can even creep home by coastal waters with little fear of being attacked.

At the head of the credit side of his account Hitler may well write "Great facilities for striking at Britain and her shipping."

By occupying so many prosperous countries the greatest brigand of all times has secured opportunities for loot such as none of his predecessors ever conceived possible. It is true that he maintains that all he is really doing is to take somewhat backward or untutored nations

into the fold where they will be able—eventually—to enjoy the advantages of Nazi doctrines and the blessings of a “New World Order.” Meanwhile, owing to their misguided adherence to the “Old Order”—and especially that arch exponent of it, Britain—there is a war on. Germany must have the means to fight and live; so if, for the time being, there is a bit of murdering and plundering, well—as the Americans say—that is “just too bad.” But it will be all right in the end—for Germany at any rate.

So Hitler chalks up “Supplies from Occupied Countries” as another asset—exact value, however, a little difficult to calculate.

What of the strategical potentialities of the Eastward thrust—surely that must yield rich prizes. The Rumanian oil fields at any rate fulfil (partially) a long-felt want. The way through the Balkans leads to Greece, Turkey, Syria, Egypt, Iraq, Iran . . . even India: it is Kaiser Wilhelm’s dream all over again. Something went wrong before; but this time things are different: they must be, for are there not the greatest assets of all to swell the grand total—the world’s greatest army, an irresistible (it ought to be) air force, and a growing under-water navy. What Powers can withstand this array of force? How can there be any liabilities? But there are!

*Liabilities.*—In spite of his phenomenal military successes, all is not gold that glitters for Hitler. A clever cartoon in a fairly recent issue of one of our popular illustrated papers portrayed the Fuehrer as the opulent chairman explaining to a general meeting of robot shareholders that their business showed a huge increase of capital—but unfortunately no dividends! Nothing could better illustrate the result of the War up to date so far as the German people are concerned. They have yet to learn the great lesson that territory without trade is a liability and not an asset; and the corollary that you cannot trade successfully with unfriendly folk.

It is not an exaggeration to say that Nazi Germany has alienated nearly every other nation in the world. She has only one ally—Italy, and most Italians hate Germans with an instinctive and inherent hatred. Even nations like the Norwegians, Dutch and Belgians, who had much in common with their present masters and who viewed them before the War with some admiration if with some anxiety, have now sampled what it is like to be under the latest pattern of the Prussian jack-boot. Those who are free are more and more determined to fight for their freedom; those who are enslaved pray for the success of British arms as their one

hope of liberation. Hitler himself may ignore this liability; but the fates have entered it at the very top of the debit side of his account.

An ally should surely be an asset; but it is unnecessary to do more than quote the concluding words of these Notes in the Journal for August last, which read "Hitler may discover, as we did in the last war, that Italy as an ally is a liability and not an asset; but that, unlike us, he is not able to prop her up to the end:" he has already made that discovery; the propping has begun as a measure of urgent necessity.

But, above all, the chief strategical liability for Germany—as for all our antagonists throughout history—and the greatest barrier to the attainment of her ambitions, is the sea. Dare she put all to the test and seek in the air the domination of that element which stands between her and the opportunity to crush Britain by sheer weight of her armies? There is very little doubt now that she hoped to bring that off last year, but that the initial attempts to secure the necessary supremacy in the air were so disastrous that she had to give up the whole project for the time being.

Doubtless the winter has not been wasted, and German factories have been busy night and day turning out more and more war machines—especially aircraft; yet air power is relative and we, too, have not been idle. We have had a number of official pronouncements to the effect that, relatively, Germany is now weaker in the air than when the War started.

On balance, it would seem, then, that the situation is not such as would warrant Germany extending the War as a business proposition. Rather does it call for making an end of the liabilities which she has brought on herself by going to war. For a generation her people have been brought up to believe only what their leaders wish them to believe and to see only what they think it expedient they should see; but if they could have a glimpse of the national ledgers with the true entries, how could they fail to realize that the greatest liability of all which they are carrying to-day is Hitler, because no honest trader will ever do business with them until he and his fellow gangsters have been obliterated.

### ITALY

*Assets.*—Italy has but two assets—her geographical position and Germany as an ally. It is merely a question of whether the former is sufficiently important to enable her to retain the latter. If Hitler thinks he can by-pass the British hold over the Mediterranean by striking

through the Balkans into Egypt and the Middle East, he may not strain his resources to support the broken end of the Axis much longer. If France and Spain could be persuaded that their future is linked with the survival of the Italian empire, things might be different; but—to quote our American friends, again—"What a hope"!

*Liabilities.*—The most optimistic Fascist must realize that Italy's liabilities completely outbalance her assets as a result of the latest events. She gave hostages to fortune by entering the War with vast military commitments in Africa and with little hope of maintaining the essential sea communications to keep them supplied.

Her army in North Africa has sustained one of the most crushing defeats in history, and her losses in men and material have been shattering. In Abyssinia, Eritrea, and Somaliland her forces are threatened with annihilation.

Worst of all for the Italian people, they are threatened with all the terrors of economic collapse combined with the oppression of a foreign army of occupation.

For all this, as our Prime Minister has emphasized, they have to thank "one Man": they, too, have as their greatest liability a vain-glorious leader—but *he* is not even a Hitler; he is merely Mussolini.

### THE BRITISH EMPIRE

*Assets.*—The assets of the British Empire need no long cataloguing: they are known to us all; they are simple, but they are great. They can be listed as follows:—

1. The goodwill of the freedom-loving people of the world.
2. The unity of purpose and mutual confidence of the peoples of our great free Commonwealth.
3. Our own resources and the active support and assistance of those of our friends, especially of the United States.
4. The fact that our credit abroad is still good, whereas our enemy's is negligible.
5. The strategical position of Britain as an advance base for the final assault on Germany.
6. Our command of sea communications and our ability to deny them to the enemy.
7. Our ever increasing air power.

*Liabilities.*—We must not be blind to our liabilities, and the list, if it need not be long, is none the less formidable :—

1. Our loss of efficiency due to our adherence to democratic principles coupled with bureaucratic methods.
2. The threat to our shipping due to the combination of new and old weapons and the variety of bases from which the enemy can strike.
3. The necessity to keep a large proportion of our sea, land and air forces tied to this country for its defence against invasion.
4. The great demands on our forces and on our shipping which operations overseas entail.
5. The menace of enemy air attack—especially at night, which, apart from any military damage he may do, makes continual demands on our man-power and materials for purely defensive purposes.

These are only some of the more important of our assets and liabilities. The free indulgence of imagination will enable our readers to add many other items to both lists ; yet they will scarcely affect the ultimate balance. What outweigh all else is the "will to win" which unites us all, and the knowledge that the world worth living in waits confidently on our victory.

#### HITLER'S ATTEMPT TO FOMENT ANGLO-FRENCH DISSENSION.

In his New Year proclamation, Hitler stated that : "When British propagandists try to make out that France broke away from the War quite unnecessarily, we can say that the first units to give up were the British divisions. From the first moment of our attack in the West, this British Army had only one thought—to vacate the Continent as speedily as possible. . . . At the time of the French armistice, the British had long since fled *via* Dunkirk, while the French were still fighting."

Needless to say, these allegations are entirely false. They are based on the shaky foundations of suppression of the relevant facts and distortion of the truth which we are accustomed to find at the bottom of all the Fuehrer's utterances. Of course he did not expect the people of Britain to believe his fairy stories ; but he was alarmed at the growth of the Free French movement and at the deepening sense of solidarity between the French and British peoples, so he endeavoured to foment mistrust between us. Fortunately the facts are plain for all to read and give the lie direct to yet another machiavelian utterance. Let us deal with these fabrications in logical order.

<sup>1</sup> *The Times*, 1st January, 1941.



To begin with, Hitler has declared that from the start of the German attack in the West, the British Army's chief pre-occupation was to vacate the Continent as quickly as possible: if that were true, we should naturally expect to hear that the B.E.F. had initiated the campaign by a rapid retreat to the Channel ports. What in fact actually happened? When the news of the German invasion of Holland and Belgium on 10th May reached our High Command, the B.E.F., which was stationed in North-East France, advanced into Belgium with such speed that by the evening certain mechanized units had reached positions on the River Dyle, East of Brussels—some 80 miles from their starting points. The remainder of our troops followed up quickly and occupied positions on the Dyle, which they held against all assaults by the enemy until 16th May. Instead of withdrawing to the Channel ports, therefore, the B.E.F. rushed forward to meet the enemy and held up superior forces for nearly a week.

Again, Hitler has asserted that the first units to give up were the British: the truth is the exact opposite. While the B.E.F. was resisting successfully on the Dyle, the Germans launched an attack on 16th May with armoured forces South of Namur. The IXth French Army, holding the line of the Meuse at this point was completely overwhelmed as a fighting formation and ceased to offer any resistance. Thousands of prisoners and vast quantities of arms and equipment were lost. The defeat of this Army was crucial. There is no desire on our part to impute blame or to imply that our Allies should have done better; nevertheless it is on record that the first units to give up were not the British but those composing this French IXth Army. Two weeks later the B.E.F. was still in action.

Then Hitler has averred that the British had long since fled *via* Dunkirk, while the French were still fighting. This allegation is as false as the others. A study of the relevant dates will make this point crystal clear. When, on 3rd June, the last elements of the B.E.F. embarked from Dunkirk, steps were taken at once to re-constitute a second B.E.F. in Northern France. The immediate role of these troops was to defend the line of the Upper Somme in conjunction with the French. On 10th June, Mr. Churchill—the Prime Minister, assured M. Reynaud, Premier of France, that Great Britain was assisting France with all available means: fresh British forces had arrived in France and more were following. Next day, Mr. Churchill, accompanied by Mr. Eden, Secretary of State for War and by General Sir John Dill, flew to Paris to concert measures of defence, and saw M. Reynaud, Marshal Pétain and General Weygand. On 13th June, part of a British division, with certain French troops operating in Normandy near the

coast, were encircled by greatly superior forces and obliged to surrender near St. Valery. British reinforcements were stated to have entered the battle South of the Seine. On 16th June the War Office announced that British troops were still fighting in Normandy in co-operation with the French.

However, the situation on the other fronts was critical. The German main thrust in France continued to develop south-eastward towards Dijon and the Saone. West of Paris, the fighting was in the region of Laigle and La Ferté Vidame. The German High Command reported that the line of retreat of the French forces withdrawing from the Saar and the Rhine had been cut. On the Saar, the Maginot line had been pierced; and the Upper Rhine, near Colmar, had been crossed on a wide front. On the night 16th-17th June, Marshal Pétain requested the German High Command for an armistice. Here, again, we do not seek to criticize the decision of the new Premier of France who was acting, as he thought, in the best interests of his country; yet it cannot be denied that when the Marshal petitioned for an armistice the British were still fighting in Northern France. Moreover, for the sake of brevity, no mention has been made of the activities of the Royal Navy or of the heroic sacrifices of the Air Force component of the B.E.F.

Apart, however, from considerations of dates and other details which although they reveal where the truth lies may seem somewhat trivial, the broad facts stand out clearly. Hitler seeks to persuade the French that the British are "quitters" and that they deserted them in their hour of need. The most effective retort to this is to point to our victories in Africa which began only six months after Marshal Pétain's armistice with Germany. By those battles we, in conjunction with our Free French Allies, have shown the world that, even if circumstances compelled us to leave one field of action, we are able to take the offensive in another in a way which may have far-reaching results.

## DIARY OF THE WAR, 1940-41

3rd November.—The R.A.F. attacked Flushing and the aerodrome at Soesterberg by daylight. Two of our aircraft were lost.

On the Macedonian front the Greeks occupied a new range of heights in Albanian territory; in Epirus Italian attacks were repulsed and tanks destroyed; in the Florina sector, also, enemy attacks were repulsed, prisoners being taken. Italian air attacks were general, both in the fighting areas and on villages in the interior of Greece. Salonika was bombed and many civilians killed.

Mr. A. V. Alexander, First Lord of the Admiralty, announced that **British troops had landed in Greek territory** and that **naval and air support** was being given.

At night, in spite of very bad weather, the R.A.F. carried out successful attacks upon Kiel and Naples.

4th November.—The night air-raids on Britain were confined to North-East England and East Scotland, where a few casualties were reported.

Few enemy aircraft crossed the coast after daylight came. Bombs dropped in the London area and at points in the Midlands and East Anglia caused little damage and few casualties.

**The loss was announced of H.M. armed merchant cruisers "Laurentic" and "Patroclus," sunk by torpedo.** The survivors so far reported numbered respectively 52 officers and 316 ratings and 33 officers and 230 ratings.

H.M. trawler "Tilburyess" was reported lost as the result of an action with enemy aircraft.

**The destruction of two Italian submarines by our naval light forces was announced,** in one case with the co-operation of the R.A.F.

On the Macedonian front the Greeks captured another height in Albanian territory, and an unofficial report spoke of the bombardment of Koritza by the Greek artillery. At various points prisoners and material were captured, Greek aircraft carrying out successful operations against Italian troops. The Italians bombed Reiteres (in the fighting zone) from the air, also Piræus, Patras, Volo and a number of smaller places in the interior. Five Italian aircraft were destroyed and one Greek machine was lost.

**British troops** were officially stated to have **landed in Crete**, and the R.A.F. continued reconnaissance of Greek and Italian waters.

In the Egyptian theatre the R.A.F. carried out extensive reconnaissances over Libya and machine-gunned with effect Italian motor-transport.

The South African Air Force concluded successful bombing operations begun on the previous day against military objectives in Abyssinia and Italian Somaliland, shooting down one enemy aircraft.

Colonel Yuste, commanding the Spanish troops in the Tangier zone, was reported to have announced the suspension of the International Committee of Control and to have proclaimed himself Governor.

At night the R.A.F. operations against Germany were hampered by bad weather, but harassing attacks were launched against the docks and shipping at Le Havre, Boulogne and Ostend.

The R.A.F. made a night raid upon military objectives at Naples.

During the night enemy air-raids on Britain were widespread and on a fairly heavy scale. Bombs were dropped on London, two towns in the Midlands, Merseyside, South-East England, the Eastern Counties and on Scotland, but damage and casualties were small.

5th November.—Air-raids on Britain during the day consisted of three attempts to reach London, all defeated, and one on Dorset, which did not penetrate beyond the coastal area. Damage and casualties were reported from East Kent. Seven enemy aircraft were destroyed; we lost five fighters but only two pilots.

An aircraft of the Coastal Command was attacked by two enemy fighters and shot one down into the sea.

A convoy of 38 ships was **attacked in the Atlantic by a German surface raider** (said to be a warship of the "Admiral Scheer" class). The escort, H.M. armed merchant cruiser "**Jervis Bay**," covered the escape of most of the vessels by most gallantly engaging the enemy, despite her greatly inferior armament. After an engagement lasting nearly two hours, the "**Jervis Bay**," which was heavily hit and on fire, sank, having continued in action to the last.

The Admiralty announced the sinking of two German submarines, one of which had been responsible for the loss of the "Empress of Britain."

Greek forces captured a new position near Koritza in Albania, together with prisoners and war material, and Greek aircraft raided successfully the aerodromes at Koritza and Argyro.

The R.A.F. reconnoitred Italian ports and coastal waters and at night delivered a destructive bombing raid on Brindisi.

Italian air-raids were made on Piræus, Yanina and various towns and villages; also on Monastir (Yugo-Slavia). Two Italian bombers were shot down.

In the House of Commons the Prime Minister stated that a British naval and air base had already been established in Crete. The R.A.F. reconnaissance of Greek and Italian waters continued.

In Egypt, South-East of Sidi Barani, Italian ground patrols were successfully engaged by our artillery. The R.A.F. bombed troops, transport and depots at Bardia, Fort Maddalena and Garn el Grein (100 miles South of Bardia).

The R.A.F. also bombed the Jibuti-Diredawa (Abyssinia) railway and aircraft of the Rhodesian squadron attacked enemy troops North of Kassala (Sudan). In this area our mechanized patrols also inflicted casualties on the enemy.

At night the R.A.F. bombed petroleum sheds at Emden; ship-building yards at Bremerhaven and Bremen; an electricity power-station at Hamburg; and the submarine building yards at Vegesack, near Bremen. The ports of Boulogne, Calais, Dunkirk, Antwerp and Flushing and a number of German aerodromes were also heavily attacked.

6th November.—Night attacks by enemy aircraft on the coast of Scotland, the Midlands and London failed to inflict serious damage or casualties. One German bomber was destroyed.

Day attacks by enemy aircraft were, for the most part, intercepted and driven back. Bombs dropped on Southampton caused some casualties and damage. Four German aircraft were destroyed in addition to a Dornier flying-boat shot down by the Coastal Command; we lost four fighters, one of the pilots being saved.

During the day the R.A.F. bombed the oil refineries at Salzbergen, Haamstede aerodrome, and shipping in the harbour at Cuxhaven. A convoy of motor-vessels off Den Helder was also attacked. Two of our aircraft were lost.



The Admiralty announced that on the 2nd November **H.M. submarine "Taku" had sunk an enemy tanker** which was on her way to "a French port in enemy hands."

On the Greek front the Greek forces made a slight withdrawal on the left (coastal sector) in Epirus. Italian aeroplanes bombed cities, towns and villages in the interior of Greece.

R.A.F. bombers made a successful attack upon the Italian aerodrome at Valona (Albania). Reconnaissances were made over the Ionian and Ægean seas.

**A British column, supported by units of the R.A.F., surprised and captured Gallabat (Sudan) from the Italians.** At least four Italian aircraft were shot down; we lost five fighters, but only three pilots.

Assab (Eritrea) was successfully attacked by the R.A.F. The South African Air Force attacked Italian shipping on the Juba river (Kenya) and also the aerodrome at Gobwen.

Perim island (Red Sea) was attacked by Italian aircraft.

At night the R.A.F. bombed works at Spandau (Berlin) and a railway junction North-West of the city. Attacks were also made on the synthetic oil plants at Leuna and Homburg; Duisberg on the Rhine; factories near Düsseldorf; and railway yards and junctions at Halle, near Pretzsch on the Elbe, and near Cologne. The enemy gun positions at Cap Gris Nez were bombed.

Enemy aircraft dropped bombs just before dusk in Yorkshire and in the Eastern Counties where some casualties and damage were caused. During the night the London area, points in the Home Counties and in South, South-East and South-West England, a Midland town, and a district of South-West Scotland were attacked. Casualties and damage were nowhere heavy.

7th November.—During the day enemy aircraft in formation made an attempt to attack London by way of the Thames estuary, but were driven back. Two attacks on Portsmouth were likewise intercepted. A few bombs were dropped on East Coast towns. Seven German aircraft were shot down; we lost five fighters but no pilots.

H.M.S. "Egret," which sustained a few casualties, destroyed one German dive-bomber and hit another.

General de Gaulle reported that Free French forces operating from the Cameroons and from the southern border of Gabun (French Equatorial Africa) had captured from the Vichy Govern-

ment forces Mitzic on 30th October, La Lara on 1st November, and Lambaréné on 5th November.

In Greece local attacks made by the Italians in Epirus were repulsed. Italian aircraft bombed Corfu and towns and villages in the interior.

The R.A.F. again raided Valona aerodrome (Albania), and made reconnaissance flights over Albania and southern Italy. At night a very destructive raid on Brindisi was carried out.

In Egypt Italian aircraft twice bombed Siwa, doing slight damage.

Italian troops reoccupied Gallabat (Sudan), the British forces having withdrawn to avoid heavy air attacks.

A British merchantman was sunk by mine off the southern coast of Australia.

**At night the R.A.F. made a very heavy attack upon Krupp's works at Essen, much destruction being caused.** Other objectives included the synthetic oil plant at Cologne; blast furnaces at Düsseldorf and Oberhausen; docks on the Dortmund-Ems canal; Duisberg on the Rhine; and shipping in the harbour at Dunkirk. A concentrated attack was made upon the German submarine base at Lorient, and many German aerodromes were bombed. We lost no aircraft.

8th November.—Enemy aircraft dropped bombs during the night on London and at places in the Home Counties; also in the Midlands and on a town in South-West England. Damage and casualties were not large.

German aircraft made small-scale raids during the day, dropping bombs at points on the West Coast, in the Midlands and in the London area where the only damage occurred. Dive-bombers attacked British shipping off the East and South-East coasts. **Twenty German aircraft were destroyed; we lost six fighters but only three pilots. In addition, H.M.S. "Winchester" shot down two dive-bombers.** One British merchant ship (1,900 tons) was sunk and one (1,200 tons) was damaged.

Comparative quiet prevailed upon the Greek front where the Greeks continued to gather in prisoners and material.

The Admiralty announced that the Greek Government had given notice of minefields laid in the Gulf of Gavalla, the Gulf of Salonika, and the waters inside the Euboean islands.

On the Egyptian front R.A.F. bombers raided Tobruk and Derna in Libya.

In Abyssinia the R.A.F. bombed Keren and Agordat.

The American ship, "City of Rayville," was sunk by mine whilst on passage from Adelaide to Melbourne.

**President Roosevelt** (elected for his third term of office on 6th November) **announced that Great Britain and Canada would, in future, receive one-half of the armaments and equipment now being produced in the U.S.A.**

At night a strong force of R.A.F. bombers attacked railway stations and goods yards in the city of Munich. Other forces renewed the attack on Italy, bombing the aircraft factory at Turin and the Pirelli magneto works at Milan. Other objectives of the night included oil refineries at Gelsenkirchen and Frankfurt; aircraft factories at Nuremberg and Amsterdam; goods yards at Hamm, Soest, Osnabrück, Duisberg-Ruhrort, and the Hook of Holland; railway communications at Stuttgart, Mors, Saarbrücken, Mainz, and Le Havre; and eighteen enemy aerodromes. A concentrated attack was made on the submarine base at Lorient with good results. All our aircraft returned safely.

9th November.—German air-raids during the night caused some damage and casualties in London and the surrounding districts. Elsewhere little harm was done.

Daylight air attacks on Britain were on a small scale, but bombs were dropped in the London area, in the Midlands and in South-East and South-West England, also in the North-East and the South. Some damage and casualties resulted. Four German bombers were shot down.

The younger half of the 1905 class (35 years of age group) registered for military service, the first registration for three months.

**The Admiralty announced that H.M. submarine "Sturgeon" had sunk two German supply ships; also that H.M. submarine H 49, long overdue, must be presumed to be lost.**

On the Greek front no events of importance occurred, but the Greeks continued to take prisoners. The R.A.F. delivered a very successful attack on military objectives at Naples.

Assab (Eritrea) and Keren, Teclezan and Agordat (Abyssinia) were bombed by the R.A.F.

At night the R.A.F. and Fleet Air Arm combined in a successful attack upon the enemy submarine base at Lorient. The docks at Calais and Boulogne were bombed by the R.A.F., also enemy aerodromes used in the raiding of Britain. None of our aircraft was lost.

No serious air attack developed on any part of England and Wales during the night. Casualties were slight and damage small. Three German aircraft were destroyed.

The increasing intensity and scope of the R.A.F. offensive against Germany and the German-occupied territories continued to show a striking contrast to the poor results achieved by the enemy air-raids on Britain. On the 5th November Mr. Winston Churchill stated that the German air-raids had resulted in the loss of 14,000 civilians killed and 20,000 severely injured; casualties to the troops were, approximately, 300 killed and 500 wounded; the damage and interruption to British war industry was insignificant. It was more than ever clear that the German plans had gone awry. Nothing was yet known of the details of French "collaboration" demanded by Germany; the impending visit of M. Molotoff to Berlin, announced at the end of the week, was of some significance.

The moderate tone of the Greek communiques did not conceal the fact that the Italian invasion had resulted in a serious defeat for the aggressor. British air forces, operating from Greek territory, were beginning to strike with increasing power at Italian bases in Albania and also at Southern Italy. The Italians had made no effort to resume their advance into Egypt, and had clearly been thrown upon the defensive along the Sudan border. General de Gaulle was making himself master of the whole of Gabun (French Equatorial Africa), but there was little change in the situation throughout the French North African possessions. Disquieting reports came to hand of a German "archeological mission" in the hinterland of Syria.

British mercantile tonnage sunk by enemy action during the week ended 27th-28th October amounted to 9,986, the lowest weekly total since the beginning of April. Six ships were lost and, in addition, two Allied ships (6,874 tons). Such fluctuations were to be expected; but, as Mr. Winston Churchill pointed out in the House of Commons on the 5th November, the denial of the use of the ports in southern and western Ireland for the refuelling of our flotillas and aircraft was an unconscionable handicap to our anti-submarine campaign. Italian submarines were known to be operating in the Atlantic.

Spanish action in taking the Tangier zone under military control seemed to have been taken on Madrid's own initiative. Several Italian submarines had sought refuge in the harbour of Tangier.

10th November.—Enemy air-raids, on a moderate scale, did a little damage in the Kent and Sussex coastal area in the morning. A deliberate machine-gun attack upon the Scilly Isles was quite ineffective. In the afternoon a German formation was driven away from the Dorset coast.

The R.A.F. attacked, by daylight, shipping in the harbours of Boulogne and Calais.

On the Greek front (Epirus sector) Italian troops were dispersed by artillery fire and war material was captured by the Greeks. Some details were given of the defeat and practical annihilation of the Italian 3rd Alpine Division in the fighting 28th October–10th November. This division had attempted to cross the Pindus mountains, and established itself at Metzovo on the main road between Epirus and Thessaly; after an initial advance, the division, with attached troops, had been completely routed, the remnants carrying back with them in their flight reinforcements sent up from Valona.

The R.A.F. bombed with good effect Saranda and Konispol Italian bases in Albania.

In the course of three days, 8th–10th November, the anti-aircraft fire of the British Fleet in the Mediterranean destroyed at least four Italian aircraft, our ships suffering no damage of any kind.

**Libreville, the capital of Gabon (French Equatorial Africa), was surrendered to the Free French forces by its garrison of Vichy Government adherents.**

Our forces continued to be active in the area East of Gallabat (Sudan-Abyssinia frontier), and operations progressed favourably in the Kassala region (Sudan-Eritrea frontier).

The R.A.F. raided Assab (Eritrea).

At night the R.A.F. carried out very extensive operations although hampered by severe electrical storms and icing conditions. The targets included oil plants at Gelsenkirchen, Ruhrland and Bremen; factories at Essen (Krupp's), Mannheim, Amsterdam (Fokker) and Dresden; docks and shipping at Kiel and Duisburg and at the seaports of Lorient, Cherbourg, Le Havre, Dunkirk



and Flushing; railway junctions at Danzig, Dessau, Münster, Mannheim and Dresden; and fourteen German aerodromes. Five aircraft were lost by the R.A.F. operating from home bases during the day and night.

11th November.—Enemy air-raids on Britain during the night were principally confined to London, but casualties and damage were not heavy. Other points visited were on the East Coast of England, in the Thames estuary, and on the South Coast.

**Italian aircraft co-operated with the German in daylight attacks** which sought to approach London from the South-East. The enemy also delivered air-attacks upon a convoy and upon shipping in the Thames estuary. No less than **twenty-six enemy aircraft were destroyed, the Italians losing seven bombers and six fighters, the Germans five bombers, seven fighters and a seaplane.** One of the German bombers was shot down by a detachment of the Home Guard. Two of our fighter pilots were lost.

Meanwhile, enemy air attacks were made upon one of our convoys in the North Sea. Two ships were damaged, but reached port. H.M.S. "Vivien" shot down one German bomber and severely damaged another; H.M.S. "Londonderry" shot down one; H.M.S. "Vimiera" shot down two; and one was shot down and one damaged by H.M. tug "St. Mellons."

The R.A.F. attacked with success during the day the naval base at Lorient and the aerodromes at Brest, St. Brieuc and St. Malo.

In Greece, the Greek forces continued to gather in prisoners and war material. Italian aircraft attacked Yanina, Corfu and towns and villages. The R.A.F. attacked Italian bases in Albania, bombing Valona and, at night, Durazzo.

The Admiralty reported that aircraft from H.M.S. "Ark Royal" had bombed the harbour and aerodrome at Cagliari (Sardinia). During the operations two "shadowing" aircraft were destroyed by our fighters.

On the Egyptian front the R.A.F. made successful night raids on Benghazi, Berka and Tobruk, the Italian bases in Libya. Italian aircraft dropped bombs in the Canal zone and near Cairo.

British operations proceeded in the Kassala and Gallabat areas of the Sudan border. Gallabat was recaptured, and the Italians at Metemma (beyond the Abyssinian border) were shelled

effectively by our artillery. The Rhodesian Air Squadron bombed transport on the Metemma-Gondar road.

R.A.F. bombed military objectives in Italian East Africa (Eritrea), including Zula, Massawa and Keren, Mai Adaga and Gura.

At night the Fleet Air Arm attacked the Italian fleet in harbour at Taranto. One battleship of the "Littorio" class, one of the "Cavour" class, two cruisers and two fleet auxiliaries were very severely damaged and partially sunk; it was thought that another battleship of the "Cavour" class had suffered a like fate. Two of our aircraft were lost.

Our light naval forces attacked an Italian convoy in the Straits of Otranto during the night. Two of four supply ships were sunk outright and the two others set on fire "and almost certainly sunk," the two escorting destroyers making their escape behind a smoke-screen. We suffered no loss.

Owing to bad weather the R.A.F. undertook no night raids upon Germany and German-occupied territory.

Enemy aircraft dropped bombs in the London area and the Home Counties towards dusk. After darkness fell small-scale raids were carried out on the London area, the South-East and South-West and the Eastern Counties. Few casualties and little damage resulted.

12th November.—Raids on Britain during the day were on a minor scale. Bombs were dropped in the London area, but few casualties and little damage resulted. One German bomber was shot down.

The Admiralty reported the safe arrival in port of 24 ships from the convoy attacked by the German surface raider on the 5th November (q.v.).

On the Greek frontier the Italian retreat from the Pindus area continued, and the Greeks advanced in Epirus. Italian aircraft bombed Greek villages.

The R.A.F. attacked Italian troops and transport at Koritza and the Italian communications in Albania. At night the R.A.F. again attacked the Italian bases, bombing Bari (South Italy) and Valona (Albania). Durazzo was bombed again.

On the Egyptian front the R.A.F. attacked Italian bases in Libya: Tobruk, Bardia and Bomba.

In Italian East Africa the R.A.F. made successful raids upon Bahardar and Azozo (Abyssinia), Zula (Eritrea) and Harmil

Island (Red Sea). At night the offensive against Eritrea and Abyssinia was continued, Gura, Keren, Agordat and Diredawa being bombed.

At night, also, the R.A.F. resumed their attacks upon Germany, bombing the oil plants at Gelsenkirchen and Cologne, Duisberg, and railway centres in the Ruhr and near Cologne. The submarine base at Lorient was heavily bombed as well as the docks at Flushing and Dunkirk, and several enemy aerodromes. One of our aircraft was lost.

13th November.—During the night German aircraft bombed London causing damage and casualties, and the Midlands and Merseyside, which suffered less severely. A few bombs were dropped at points, in the Home Counties and South-East England.

Scattered air-raids were made on England in the course of the day, casualties and damage being caused in Kent coastal towns and in the Midlands. Four German bombers were destroyed.

The Admiralty reported the safety of six more ships belonging to the convoy attacked by the German raider on 5th November (q.v.).

In the course of the 12th and 13th November the Mediterranean Fleet shot down three more Italian aircraft and damaged another.

In the Greek theatre of war Greek troops attacked successfully in the Pindus sector and pushed their advance into Albanian territory. Greek aircraft bombed the enemy aerodrome at Koritza with good effect. Italian bombers attacked Greek villages in the interior.

The R.A.F. bombed Argyro and Valona, the Italian bases in Albania, and at night attacked the docks and harbour at Taranto causing much destruction.

The bombing operations of the R.A.F. on the Egyptian front consisted of attacks upon Derna, Bardia and Benghazi (Libya) and Sidi Barani (Egypt).

The Free French forces accepted the surrender of Port Gentil and thus completed their occupation of Gabon (French Equatorial Africa).

**Air Chief Marshal Sir Robert Brooke-Popham** was appointed to the newly created post of **Commander-in-Chief Far East**, with headquarters at Singapore.

The night bombing offensive of the R.A.F. included attacks upon railway yards and stations in Berlin; oil refineries at Leuna,

Gelsenkirchen, Cologne and Hanover; docks at Wilhelmshaven, Bremerhaven, Duisberg, Dortmund and Calais; railway yards at Rheine and Dusseldorf; factories at Geldern, Cologne and Lintorf; and aerodromes at Haamstede, Kreuzbruch (North of Berlin), Lubeck and Nordeney. These operations were carried out in very bad flying conditions. Two of our aircraft were lost.

14th November.—Few aircraft were over England during the night. Bombs were dropped in the London area and at points in East and South-East England. Two German bombers were shot down.

Daylight raids on England had little success. Bombs were dropped in Kent and one coastal town, but **nineteen enemy aircraft were shot down. Two of our fighters were lost but the pilots of both were saved.**

British guns near Dover shelled the French coast.

The R.A.F. bombed shipping in the harbour at Benghazi (Libya).

During the day and night the R.A.F. carried out destructive bombing raids upon Kassala (Sudan), Assab and Asmara (Eritrea), and Dire-dawa and Yavello (Abyssinia). The night attack on Yavello was the work of the South African Air Force.

**The night offensive of the R.A.F. in the West included very heavy raids upon the terminal railway stations and their extensive goods yards in Berlin. Other of our bomber formations attacked an oil refinery at Hamburg; an aeroplane factory at Bremen; 26 enemy aerodromes; and harbours and shipping in ports from Stavanger (Norway) to Lorient (Brittany). Ten of our aircraft were lost.**

Coventry was very heavily attacked by large formations of German aircraft during the night, and, although industrial establishments suffered little, casualties were estimated to exceed a thousand and much damage was done to the city. Bombs were also dropped in other Midland towns, the London area, and at various points of England and Wales.

15th November.—Enemy air-raids during the day did a little damage and caused some casualties on the outskirts of London. **Eighteen German aircraft were destroyed; we lost one fighter and one pilot.**

A bombardment was maintained for some hours across the Channel by the British batteries near Dover and the German guns on the French coast.

The Admiralty announced the loss of H.M. trawlers "Rinovia," "Sevra," "William Wesney" and "Stella Orion" and of H.M. drifter "Girl Helen," sunk during mine-sweeping operations.

Two more ships of the convoy attacked by the German raider on the 5th November (q.v.) were announced to be safe.

The loss was announced of the Free French patrol vessel "Le Poulmic."

The Greek advance became general along the whole battle front, prisoners and war material being taken. Konitza (in Greek territory) was partially burnt by the retreating Italians.

The R.A.F. did considerable execution among Italian troops and transport in the Koritza (Albania) area. At night our bombers raided Brindisi.

On the Egyptian front the R.A.F. raided Italian aerodromes at Sollum, Menastir and Sidi Barani (Egypt) and Bardia, Bomba and Tobruk (Libya).

During the day and night Gura, Zula and Massawa (Eritrea) and the Jibuti-Addis Ababa railway (Abyssinia) were attacked by the R.A.F.

Day and night attacks were made by the R.A.F. on coastal objectives ranging from Norway to occupied France. Military stores and buildings at Rennes were successfully attacked and also several aerodromes.

At night the R.A.F. carried out special large-scale bombing operations against railways, shipyards, docks, and public utility services in Hamburg. Other objectives included Kiel dockyards and the ports of Ostend and Calais.

In the course of all these operations two German aircraft were shot down; we lost two aircraft.

A heavy and sustained night-attack was made on London by German aircraft which were kept at a great height by our anti-aircraft fire and dropped their bombs at random. Considerable damage was done but casualties were not so heavy as might have been anticipated. The Home Counties and a number of places in the Midlands and a South Coast town suffered slightly. Five German bombers were shot down.

16th November.—Day attacks on Britain by enemy aircraft were on a very small scale. A few bombs were dropped on a Kent coastal town and one German aircraft machine-gunned ineffectively two points in the Hebrides.



Daylight raids by the R.A.F. were made upon oil plants at Cologne and Bremen and on the Dortmund-Ems canal.

On the Greek frontier the Italians continued to retreat, burning and ravaging villages as they did so. Italian aircraft attacked Corfu but did no damage. At night the R.A.F. bombed Bari (South Italy).

The elder half of the 1905 class (35 years of age group) registered for military service.

Italian aircraft carried out four night raids upon Alexandria but did little damage and caused few casualties.

The R.A.F. made night attacks upon Gura and Agordat (Eritrea).

At night the R.A.F. renewed the attack upon Hamburg, bombing railway yards, oil refineries, electricity works, and industrial establishments. One formation concentrated upon the Blohm and Voss shipyards. Docks at Antwerp, Dunkirk, and enemy aerodromes were also bombed. In all these operations we lost three aircraft.

Enemy air-raids on Britain were for the most part again concentrated upon London, and bombs were dropped in the Home Counties. A town in the Midlands suffered also, but damage was nowhere very extensive and casualties were not heavy. One German bomber was shot down.

The air war in the West was remarkable for the extensive scope of the operations of the R.A.F. who bombed objectives at Dantzig, Berlin (twice) and Dresden; also for the appearance of the strong Italian formation of fighters and bombers which took part in the raids on our coasts (11th November) and received severe punishment.

The success of the attack upon the Italian warships in the harbour of Taranto by the Fleet Air Arm (night 11th-12th November) was confirmed by subsequent reconnaissance. Three battleships (one of the "Littorio" and two of the "Cavour" class) were certainly crippled; one of our pilots reported that four sunken vessels could be seen under water off the entrance to the graving dock in the inner harbour.

Before the end of the week it was apparent that the Italian invasion of Greece had ended in complete failure. Everywhere the enemy was in retreat, his divisions having suffered heavy losses and great disorganization. Even supposing that no serious resistance had been anticipated, it was difficult to understand why the Italian ground forces had not been closely supported from the air and, in particular, why the coastal advance in Epirus lacked naval and air co-operation; indeed the

whole affair was mishandled as was shown by drastic changes in the Italian commands. With the approach of winter, campaigning conditions on the Albanian frontier were becoming difficult, whilst the establishment of British naval and air bases in Greek territory constituted a great and increasing threat to the Italian communications.

Military assistance from Germany—not yet at war with Greece—could most quickly be afforded by the passing of German forces from Rumania through Bulgaria or from Hungary through Yugo-Slavia; yet it had appeared to be no part of German policy to set the Balkans ablaze and Hitler might still refuse to allow the Italian failure to force his hand. A conference was held at Innsbruck on the 15th November between Marshal Badoglio and General Field-Marshal Keitel, the Italian and German Commanders-in-Chief.

The two-days conference, terminating on the 13th November, in Berlin between M. Molotoff and Hitler was judged to be chiefly concerned with economic and trade questions. It may well have been that Germany had fresh demands to make upon Russia for the supply of essential commodities for the prosecution of the War.

Important progress was made by the Delhi Conference—representatives from Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, India, Burma, Ceylon, South Rhodesia, East Africa, Hong Kong, Malaya and Palestine (delegates from the Dutch East Indies in attendance)—with the scheme for making the British territories East of Suez more or less self-supporting in respect of war supplies. The appointment of a Commander-in-Chief, Far East, covering Singapore, Malaya, Burma and Hong Kong and in liaison with Australasia, was also of great significance.

During the week ended 3rd November British merchant shipping lost by enemy action amounted to 13 vessels (65,609 tons) which included the "Empress of Britain" (42,348 tons). Four Allied ships (5,403 tons) and one neutral (1,583 tons) were sunk. In the first twelve months of the war British losses in merchant shipping amounted to 1,611,842 tons (406 ships). Our Allies lost 474,816 tons (103 ships) and neutral nations 769,212 tons (253 ships). Enemy losses were computed at 1,269,000 tons (261 ships).

The gallant service performed by H.M. armed merchant cruiser "Jervis Bay" (Captain E. S. F. Fegen, R.N.) in engaging the German warship which attacked the large British convoy on the 5th November was demonstrated in striking fashion when later reports showed that only four of the thirty-eight ships in convoy appeared to have been sunk by the raider. Thirty-two ships reached port safely; one was still unaccounted for; and one which escaped was subsequently set on fire by enemy air attack and abandoned.

On the 13th November the Ministry of Economic Warfare announced that on and after the 18th all ships sailing to and from Syria, French West Africa, Liberia, Portuguese Guinea, Madagascar, and Réunion must obtain "navicerts."

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17th November.—An enemy air formation was driven back after crossing the Kent coast and another was checked whilst over the Thames estuary. Bombs were dropped in Kent, Sussex and East Anglia, and later at other places in Sussex. Damage and casualties were slight. **Thirteen German aircraft were destroyed, one by A.A. fire; we lost five fighters but only one pilot.**

H.M. paddle minesweeper "Southsea" shot down an enemy aircraft which attacked her.

British guns near Dover and German batteries on the French coast engaged in a cross-Channel bombardment.

The Greek forces continued their pressure in Epirus and in the mountainous region East of Koritza (Albania), taking a range of heights in spite of strong air and ground resistance. At night the R.A.F. bombed Durazzo and Valona.

The Admiralty announced that light forces had successfully bombarded the port of Mogadishu (Italian Somaliland).

In the Egyptian theatre night attacks were made by the R.A.F. on Benghazi, Bardia, Tobruk and Sollum.

The night offensive of the R.A.F. against Germany concentrated principally on the oil refineries at Gelsenkirchen. Industrial targets in the Ruhr, rail and river communications in Western Germany, the naval base of Lorient in Brittany, and aerodromes in occupied territory were also bombed.

18th November.—German aircraft dropped bombs near the South Coast, at a few points in the London area, and on various Channel towns during the night. Some damage and casualties were inflicted.

During the day enemy aircraft dropped bombs at a few places on the East Coast, on the coasts of Sussex and Kent and in the London area. Damage was small and casualties were few.

From the Dover area British guns were in action against the German batteries on the French coast. The enemy reply was feeble.

Three Blenheim fighters accounted for a Dornier flying-boat and two Heinkel seaplanes over the North Sea.

On the Greek front heavy fighting took place in Epirus where no Italian forces remained South of the Kalamas river, and East of Koritza (Albania). Greek advanced troops destroyed Italian depots at Ersek and Borova (Albania). The Italian air force gave powerful support to the enemy troops. Greek aircraft bombed the aerodrome at Argyrokastro (Albania).

The R.A.F. was reported to have attacked the Italian base at Elbasan (Albania).

The South African Air Force made two effective raids on Bardera (Italian Somaliland).

The Admiralty announced that light naval forces had bombarded the port of Dante (Italian Somaliland).

On the Egyptian front the R.A.F. made night bombing raids upon the Italian bases in Libya: Benghazi, Berka, Barce, Benina and Tobruk.

Assab (Eritrea) was bombed by the R.A.F. at night.

Italian aircraft made several night raids on Alexandria, killing 53 civilians and injuring 180.

Night attacks were made by the R.A.F. on Massawa and the railway line between Agordat and Keren (Eritrea); and on Kassala (Sudan). One of our aircraft was lost.

The night bombing offensive against Germany was concentrated upon the extensive synthetic oil plant at Leuna with very satisfactory results.

At night enemy aircraft dropped a small number of bombs on Merseyside, the Midlands and points in the South of England. Little damage and few casualties were caused.

19th November.—During the night enemy aircraft were reported over Northern Ireland. No bombs were dropped.

German aircraft activity over England during the day was almost negligible. A few bombs were dropped in Kent.

Enemy batteries on the French coast shelled the Dover area for an hour but did no damage.

H.M.S. "Lowestoft" shot down a German seaplane which approached one of our convoys in the North Sea.

The Admiralty announced that H.M. submarine "Rainbow," long overdue, must be presumed lost.

On the Greek front the Italians were ejected from an important position near Koritza (Albania), and the Greeks made progress

among the Morava heights. **Eleven Italian aeroplanes were shot down by the Greek air force without loss ; the R.A.F. accounted for nine enemy aircraft.** Night bombing raids were made by the R.A.F. on Tirana and Durazzo (Albania).

In Egypt our ground forces attacked an Italian column, taking guns and prisoners ; aircraft of the Royal Australian Air Force shot down five Italian aeroplanes, losing one fighter ; another made a forced landing. At night the R.A.F. bombed Bardia and Tobruk (Libya).

Assab (Eritrea) was again the objective of a night attack by the R.A.F.

At night our light naval forces sank an enemy " E boat " in the North Sea.

Widespread bombing operations over Germany were carried out by the R.A.F. at night. Targets included military objectives in Berlin ; the shipyards and docks at Kiel, Hamburg and Bremerhaven ; the synthetic oil plants at Gelsenkirchen and Hamburg ; the electrical power station at Hamborn ; and railway yards and junctions at Bremen, Aurich and Duisberg. The naval base at Lorient and the harbour of Harfleur were bombed ; and, in addition, another attack was made upon the Skoda armament works at Pilsen. Three of our aircraft were lost.

20th November.—Enemy air-raids during the night were concentrated upon Midland towns where much private property was destroyed and a number of casualties were caused. Bombs also fell in the London area, at other points in southern England and in Scotland. At least five German bombers were destroyed.

Little damage was done by enemy aircraft over England during the day, a few bombs being dropped in Kent. One German bomber was shot down into the sea.

In Greece the Italians were driven back in Epirus after hard prolonged fighting, and lost material and prisoners. Around Koritza (Albania) the Greeks, advancing over the heights of Morava, reached the western spurs. Greek aircraft made many attacks upon Italian troops and bombed the aerodrome at Argyrokastro.

**On the Egyptian front fifteen fighters of the R.A.F., engaged sixty Italian fighters over Eastern Libya, destroyed seven, and forced down three others, without loss to themselves.** At night the R.A.F. bombed the Libyan bases of Benghazi ;



Berka, and Benina ; and a British warship bombarded the Italian camp at Maktila, on the Libyan coast.

At Aden, a British fighter brought down an Italian bomber.

Italian aircraft raided Port Sudan with little effect.

Night bombing raids were carried out by the R.A.F. upon Gura, Massawa and Asmara (Eritrea).

An Australian minesweeper was sunk with all hands by collision with a large passenger liner in Port Philip Bay (Melbourne).

The R.A.F. night offensive against Germany had for its chief objective the inland port of Duisburg-Ruhrort where extensive damage was done. In addition, the ports of Lorient, Cherbourg, Dunkirk and Ostend and several aerodromes were bombed. One of our aircraft was lost.

21st November.—German aircraft made desultory night raids over Britain dropping bombs in Midland towns, the London area, and at points in South and North-West England and in South Wales. Damage and casualties were small.

Daylight raids on Britain were of minor importance. Slight damage and some casualties were caused by bombs dropped in East Anglia, the Home Counties, and a town in southern England. One German bomber was destroyed ; we lost one fighter.

German batteries on the French coast fired on the Dover area for an hour. No damage or casualties were reported.

**The Greek advance continued along the whole front. Koritza was entered,** following the occupation of the Morova massif and Mount Ivan. In the Pindus sector Leskoviku was occupied and the advance pressed beyond Borova and Ersek. In Epirus the Italians were driven from their last hold on Greek territory. Tepelini (Albania) was bombed by the R.A.F. **The Greek destroyer "Actos," escorting a convoy, sank by depth charges a German submarine.**

At night the R.A.F. bombed the Italian bases at Bardia, Bomba and Derna (Libya).

The Air Ministry announced that Air Marshal O. T. Boyd, lately appointed deputy to the Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief Middle East, was a prisoner of the Italians. An enemy report stated that the aircraft in which he was travelling to Egypt had made a forced landing in Sicily.

The night offensive of the R.A.F. against Germany was suspended owing to bad weather.

22nd November.—Enemy aircraft in small numbers visited England during the night. Bombs dropped in East Anglia and southern England caused few casualties and little damage.

Enemy aircraft dropped bombs in the Home Counties and on a South-East Coast town during the day. Two German bombers were destroyed.

The Dover area was shelled from the French coast, but no damage or casualties were reported.

The R.A.F. made a successful attack upon the German aerodrome at Stavanger (Norway); daylight attacks were also made upon the enemy aerodromes at Schipol and Leeuwaarden (Holland), and other objectives included a factory at Solingen (Ruhr).

In Albania the Greek advance continued, with more captures of war material. Italian air attacks upon the islands of Cephalonia, Corfu and Samos did little damage, and four Italian destroyers bombarded Samos without effect.

The R.A.F. attacked Argyrokastro and the Italian communications Koritza—Pogradets in Albania. At night they raided Bari and Taranto (South Italy).

A British light armoured patrol had a successful encounter with the enemy on the North-East frontier of Kenya.

At night the R.A.F. made a heavy attack upon the aerodrome at Merignac, near Bordeaux, an enemy base for air attacks against Atlantic shipping. Other targets included oil-storage tanks at Dortmund and Wanne-Eickel; goods yards at Dortmund and Duisburg-Ruhrort; and the ports of Lorient, Cherbourg, Le Havre, Ostend and Flushing.

23rd November.—Although bombs were dropped in the London area, on Merseyside, and in North-East and South England, the main objective of enemy air attacks during the night was the West Midlands, where extensive damage was done and many casualties caused.

Enemy bombers and fighter-bombers which appeared over the South-East Coast by day were promptly attacked and dispersed. A few bombs were dropped in South London and on a town in the Thames estuary, but **seven Italian and four German aircraft were destroyed without loss to ourselves.**

An R.A.F. aircraft bombed the wireless station at Vikero (Norway).

In Albania, despite bad weather conditions, the R.A.F. raided Elbasan. The Greek advance continued along the whole front.

Two attempts of Italian aircraft to attack Malta were driven off. Only slight damage was done to the island and one, probably three, of the enemy were destroyed.

On the Egyptian front, in the Western Desert, the R.A.F. raided with success El Adem, Gazala, Menastir and Gambut.

Agordat and Gura (Eritrea) were successfully attacked by the R.A.F. who also bombed the fort at Kassala (Sudan).

At night the R.A.F. bombed goods yards and railway stations at Berlin and Leipzig. Another heavy attack was made on Duisburg-Ruhrort, and other targets included canal wharves at Cologne; railway sidings at Dortmund; oil tanks at Wanne-Eickel and Dortmund; Krupp's works at Essen; a factory at Kastrof-Rauxel; and several enemy aerodromes. Other attacks were made upon the submarine base at Lorient, a power station at Brest, and harbour installations at Boulogne.

Another force of R.A.F. bombers attacked objectives at Turin (Italy).

In all these operations two of our aircraft were lost.

Air-raids on Britain during the night were chiefly concentrated upon a town in the South of England where extensive damage was caused and a number of casualties occurred.

The enemy air-raids on Britain by night continued to cause considerable destruction mainly to private property, and to inflict casualties upon the civilian population. How to deal with the night bomber was a problem which remained to be solved. By contrast the R.A.F. nightly attacks upon Germany continue to have their effect upon the enemy's communications, shipping, ports, armament industry and fuel supplies. Interesting details of the success of these raids, collected from reliable sources, were published during the week.

The Greek victory was established beyond all doubt with the fall of Koritza and the advance of the Greek forces into Albania along the whole front. In the Koritza sector five Italian divisions, one Bersaglieri regiment and one machine-gun battalion had been identified; the captures in prisoners, guns, war material and supplies were very large. Outmanœuvred and outfought, the failure of the Italians was bound to have its repercussions in the Balkans, where Bulgaria hesitated and Yugo-Slavia took heart. Turkey remained watchful and prepared, declaring martial law in Thrace and Istanbul. In Berlin Hitler conferred

with King Boris of Bulgaria and the Foreign Ministers of Spain and Italy; Hungary, Rumania and Slovakia added their signatures to the German-Italian-Japanese pact of 27th September; but Germany gave no sign of coming to the assistance of her partner.

All R.A.F. squadrons allotted to Army formations in the United Kingdom, together with their associated training units, were formed into a new Army Co-operation Command under Air-Marshal Sir A. S. Barratt, who took up his appointment on the 20th November. The new organization was intended to increase the effectiveness of the air arm acting with the army by experimenting with and developing air tactics as part of military operations.

Those registered for military service on the 9th and 16th November, including the 1905 Class or "Age 35 Group," numbered approximately 381,643.

Sites were agreed upon for the bases in Bermuda, the Bahamas, Jamaica, Antigua, St. Lucia and British Guiana to be leased to the U.S.A. American naval patrol aircraft had begun to operate from Bermuda and American ships were already using the base in Newfoundland.

On the 21st November it was officially announced that up to date 96 civilians had been killed and 188 injured by Italian air-raids on Malta. The number of houses severely damaged was 292.

During the week ended 10th-11th November ten British ships (total tonnage 61,202), one Allied (1,930) and two neutral (8,617) were sunk by enemy action. The figures include the four vessels (total tonnage 25,423) known to have been sunk by the raider which, on 5th November, attacked the Atlantic convoy escorted by H.M.S. "Jervis Bay"; also the ship which escaped on this occasion and was afterwards attacked from the air and abandoned.

24th November.—Daylight air-raids on Britain by several formations of fighters and fighter-bombers were driven off with ease. Bombs dropped at a few points in Kent did little damage. Three enemy aircraft were destroyed without loss to ourselves.

German guns on the French coast bombarded the Dover area for an hour. No damage or casualties were reported.

Early in the morning the R.A.F. bombed the enemy aerodrome at Christiansand (Norway) and the harbour at the Hook of Holland. In co-operation with the Fleet Air Arm the docks at Boulogne were attacked.

The Admiralty announced the loss of H.M. trawler "Kingston Alalita" and H.M. drifter "Reed," sunk by enemy mines.

Continuing their advance into Albania the Greek forces occupied Moscopolis. "Mopping up" operations round Koritza yielded 1,500 prisoners, 12 heavy guns, and other war material.

The R.A.F. bombed Durazzo, where Italian shipping was damaged, and also stores and motor transport in the Tepelini area.

On the Egyptian front, in the Western Desert, the R.A.F. bombed Appolonia, Derna, Tobruk and Bardia at dawn. Italian aircraft raided Alexandria in the early morning, doing only slight damage; a few persons were injured.

In Eritrea the R.A.F. attacked Assab, Asosa and Gura.

Metemma (in Abyssinia opposite Gallabat in the Sudan) was officially reported to have been evacuated by the Italians.

At night the R.A.F. offensive against Germany concentrated on Hamburg with satisfactory results. Other targets included the Altona gasworks, the docks at Wilhelmshaven, a chemical factory at Harburg-Wilhelmsburg, the port of Boulogne, the Den Helder dockyard, anti-aircraft and searchlight positions, and air bases. One of our aircraft was lost.

25th November.—During the night the enemy air attacks were concentrated upon a town in the West of England (Bristol), where considerable damage was done and casualties occurred. Bombs were dropped at points in the London area and in the Home Counties. Three enemy bombers were destroyed.

One small formation of enemy bombers reached the outskirts of the London area in the morning. A coast town in Kent was also attacked and bombs were dropped on the South Coast and in South-East England. Damage and casualties were slight. One enemy bomber was shot down.

From 9 a.m. to noon the German guns on the French coast maintained an intermittent, and ineffective, bombardment of the Dover area.

The Greek advance in Albania continued. In the Elbasan and Tepelini districts the R.A.F. bombed enemy troops and transport with great effect although hampered by thick mist. At Argyrokastro stores were bombed and damaged.

Near Assab (Eritrea) a large motor transport park was attacked with success by the R.A.F.



At night the R.A.F. attacked the naval bases of Kiel and Wilhelmshaven, the docks at Hamburg and Willemsoord, the De Mok seaplane base, and several enemy aerodromes. One of our aircraft was lost.

26th November.—Enemy aircraft dropped a few bombs in the West of England during the night.

Bombs were dropped on a coast town in Sussex by enemy aircraft during daylight. Three enemy fighter-bombers and one float-plane were destroyed with no loss to ourselves.

In an air fight over Malta one British and one Italian fighter was brought down, the Italian pilot being killed.

The Greek advance from Epirus into Albania threatened Santi Quaranta and Argyrokastro. Heavy fighting took place at Delvino. In the centre (Leskoviki) sector the Italians continued to retreat. Beyond Koritza the Greeks repulsed counter-attacks south of Pogradetz.

The R.A.F. bombed Valona, doing severe damage to shipping, attacked Italian troops in the Tepelini area, and bombed Keleyre aerodrome.

On the Egyptian front the R.A.F. made intensive raids upon Garn-ul-Grein, Bir Sofafi, Sidi Barani and Maddalena in the Western Desert. One aircraft was lost.

The R.A.F. also raided successfully Disse island in the Gulf of Zula (Red Sea).

At night our air offensive was against armaments factories and other targets at Cologne; railways in Berlin; shipping and docks at Rotterdam, Flushing, Antwerp, Calais and Boulogne; the naval base at Lorient; oil stores at Ghent; enemy aerodromes; and enemy shipping on the Dutch coast.

A force of R.A.F. long range bombers attacked the arsenal at Turin.

In all the night operations five of our aircraft were lost.

There was very little enemy air activity over England during the night. Bombs dropped in the London area, and in the eastern and western counties did little damage and caused few casualties.

27th November.—A few bombs were dropped by the enemy in Kent and in South-West England during the day. **Eleven enemy aircraft were shot down**; we lost two fighters but no pilots.

German guns shelled the Dover area for half an hour without doing any damage.

Daylight attacks by the R.A.F. were successful against a supply ship and a tanker off the Frisian islands.

**Our Mediterranean fleet began to establish contact, about noon, with large Italian naval forces West of Sardinia.** Four enemy cruisers were first engaged, but they fled under cover of a smoke screen; later two battleships (one of the "Littorio" and one of the "Cavour" class) and other warships were engaged at long range, notably by H.M. battle cruiser "Renown," and pursued as they retreated at high speed. Subsequent air reconnaissance ascertained that **one enemy cruiser had been set on fire and two destroyers damaged.** Our only casualties were in H.M. cruiser "Berwick," which sustained two hits without suffering serious damage: one officer and six ratings were killed and nine ratings wounded. Aircraft from H.M.S. "Ark Royal" had attacked repeatedly during the pursuit; **one battleship of the "Littorio" class was hit by a torpedo, and damage appeared to be inflicted upon two cruisers of the "Bolano" class and one of the "Condottieri" class.** Later in the afternoon two air attacks were made upon our fleet, and two Italian float-planes were shot down. The fleet was unharmed, but one of our fighters was lost.

In Albania the Greek operations continued, R.A.F. fighters and bombers assisting the ground forces. Italian aircraft bombed villages in Epirus, Corfu, Cephalonia, Crete and Patras, inflicting no military damage.

It was officially reported from Australia that a British merchantman had been sunk by an enemy raider in the Indian Ocean six days previously.

At night the R.A.F. again attacked Cologne, great destruction being caused. Other targets included the docks at Boulogne, Antwerp and Le Havre. One of our aircraft was lost.

28th November.—A town in South-West England, London and its suburbs, the Home Counties, East Anglia, and South-East Scotland were bombed by enemy aircraft during the night. Some damage was done but casualties were few. One enemy bomber was destroyed.

Extensive daylight air-raids by enemy fighter-bombers did some damage to one town in South-East England. Five of these aircraft were destroyed; we lost seven fighters, but one pilot was saved.

The Admiralty announced the loss of H.M. trawlers "Dungeness" and "Fontenoy" owing to damage received in action with enemy aircraft.

Attempted air-raids on Malta cost the Italians four aircraft, no damage to the island being caused.

The Greek operations proceeded satisfactorily in Albania. Italian aircraft bombed towns and villages in Epirus, Corfu, Cephalonia and Western Peloponnessus. Enemy destroyers shelling the Corfu coast fled on the approach of the R.A.F.

The R.A.F. bombed shipping at Santi Quaranta, Durazzo, and Elbasan, destroying eight Italian aeroplanes during the day and losing two. At night a large and destructive raid was carried out on Brindisi (South Italy).

In Egypt, the R.A.F. attacked with success a small Italian column South of Sidi Barani and silenced an anti-aircraft battery, killing the gunners.

The R.A.F. again raided the port of Assab (Eritrea), and the South African Air Force severely bombed Gardula (Abyssinia).

At night the air offensive against Germany included a special attack upon the Düsseldorf and Mannheim industrial areas where much damage was done. The R.A.F. also bombed the naval yards at Stettin and an oil plant nearby; the ports of Antwerp, Boulogne and Le Havre; the docks at Cuxhaven; railway communications in western Germany; military store-houses near Mainz; and the aerodromes at Coblenz and Eindhoven. Two of our aircraft were lost.

29th November.—Extensive air-raids on England during the night concentrated chiefly upon the North-West, especially Merseyside, where considerable damage was done and some casualties were caused. A number of points in South and South-West England were bombed.

At 5.40 a.m., one of our destroyer flotillas, commanded by Captain Lord Louis Mountbatten, made contact with at least three German destroyers, which fled towards Brest, firing torpedoes. H.M.S. "Javelin," the flotilla leader, was hit, and her return to port was covered by R.A.F. fighters who shot down three German bombers and damaged a fourth. In the naval action several hits were made upon the enemy ships, but the extent of the damage could not be ascertained.

An aircraft of the Coastal Command sank an escorted enemy ship of 8,000 tons off the Dutch coast.

Small forces of German aircraft crossed the South-East Coast during the day, and bombs dropped in the London area caused some damage and a few casualties. Five of the enemy were shot down ; we lost two fighters but no pilots.

In Albania Greek forces entered Pogradetz after heavy fighting. Many prisoners, and heavy guns and other war material, were captured.

The Admiralty reported that aircraft of the Fleet Air Arm had bombed the port of Tripoli.

A successful attack by the Fleet Air Arm upon Port Laki in Leros (Dodecanese) and a naval bombardment of Ras Alula near Cape Gardafui (Italian Somaliland) were also announced by the Admiralty.

The R.A.F. attacked a large camp at Dangila (Abyssinia) where fires were started and much damage done.

At night the R.A.F. concentrated their attacks upon Cologne and the naval shipyards at Bremen. Other formations bombed Boulogne and Le Havre. All our aircraft returned safely.

30th November.—Enemy aircraft raided London during the night and also dropped bombs at various points in South, south-eastern, eastern and south-western England. Damage and casualties were not severe.

Just before daylight the R.A.F. attacked the naval base at Lorient with good effect.

During the day German aircraft dropped bombs at places in southern England and in South London. There were few casualties and little damage. Five of the enemy were shot down ; we lost two fighters but no pilots.

In Albania the Greeks made a considerable advance all along the front. Positions of considerable importance were captured in the region of Premeti on the river Viosa.

Owing to unfavourable weather the R.A.F. undertook no night operations against Germany.

Air-raids on England during the night were chiefly concentrated upon Southampton, where the damage—mostly to private property—was extensive and many casualties were caused. Bombs were dropped in the London area. At one town in South-West England the barrage drove off the raiders who dropped no bombs.

The German effort had concentrated upon the intensive bombing of the civilian population in certain of our large cities and upon the



destruction by air and submarine attack of our sea-borne traffic. Whilst the air-raids on England served no military purpose—our war industry had not been seriously dislocated thereby—our shipping losses were serious. During the week ended 17th–18th November they amounted to 50,449 tons (14 ships), Allied losses amounting to 7,769 tons (2 ships) and neutral to 1,316 tons (one ship). Measures were being taken to check the German long-range bomber operating over the Atlantic; but as our own shipyards were occupied with repairs and naval work, we were obliged to rely upon American industry to supply the new freighters required. We had at our disposal almost as much merchant tonnage as we possessed at the beginning of the war, but required much more.

Reinforcements, hurriedly brought up, had stiffened the Italian resistance, and winter conditions with snow on the mountains hampered movement; but the Greeks made satisfactory progress in Albania. The capture of Pogradetz opened the main route to the North where a further advance could threaten the Italian base at Elbasan; the advance along the Viosa river valley in the region of Premeti promised to complete the envelopment of Argyrokastro and compel a further Italian retreat in the coastal sector. The R.A.F. had done good service, both in co-operation with the Greek forces and in destructive raids upon the enemy's communications, and his bases in Albania and southern Italy.

Germany made no move to help her ally, and she was not likely to act without complete preparation. Her campaign against Rumania in the winter of 1916–17 showed what could be accomplished in the Balkans under the worst weather conditions, but the problem of passing German forces into the Mediterranean theatre of war remained to be solved.

During November Germany and Italy lost 288 aircraft in action against Britain; the loss to the R.A.F. was 119, but the pilots of 28 fighters were saved. The enemy figures do not include the aircraft shot down by H.M. ships or armed merchant vessels at sea or in port, or those accounted for by the Fleet Air Arm. In its offensive against Germany and German-occupied territories the R.A.F. lost 48 bombers, and shot down eight enemy aircraft in the course of the operations. In the Mediterranean and African theatres of war the R.A.F. destroyed 59 Italian aircraft for the loss of 18. To the Italian total must be added the machines shot down by the Greek Air Force, by the armies in the field, by ships at sea or in port, and by the Fleet Air Arm.

The first contingent of pilots and observers trained under the Empire Air Scheme arrived in London from Canada on 25th November.

In a broadcast speech to the French people on 29th November General de Gaulle announced that the Free French forces comprised



35,000 troops, 20 warships in service and 1,000 airmen ; there were 60 merchant ships at sea.

1st December.—In the early hours of the morning a patrol of our motor torpedo-boats attacked and damaged a large German supply ship off the Dutch coast. One of our vessels sustained slight damage from the gunfire of an escorting German warship.

Enemy fighters and fighter-bombers appeared over South-East England during the day and a few bombs were dropped on the outskirts of London. Eight enemy aircraft were destroyed ; we lost five fighters, but all the pilots were saved.

**The Admiralty announced that H.M. submarine "Triad," overdue, must be considered lost.**

At dawn the R.A.F. attacked the submarine base and naval docks at Lorient. Later in the day a military camp at Kristiansand (Norway) and the gasworks at Esbjerg (Denmark) were bombed successfully ; and, in the evening, the power station, jetty and dry docks at Brest.

The Greek advance into Albania met with further success. North of Pogradetz operations proceeded favourably ; among the mountains of Ostravitz (West and North-West of Koritza) Italian detachments were dispersed ; new positions were occupied and guns and prisoners captured around Premeti (on the Viosa river) ; nearer the coast, the Santi Quaranta-Argyrokastrro road came under the fire of the Greek forces.

A successful R.A.F. attack upon the Italian aerodrome at Benina (Western Desert) was reported from Egypt.

Operating from the Sudan the R.A.F. machine-gunned and bombed enemy troops and transport on the Metemma-Gondar road (Abyssinia). Other successful attacks were made upon enemy camps and barracks near Metemma and farther South at Gubba.

At night, in bad weather the R.A.F. raided the naval shipyards at Wilhelmshaven.

2nd December.—Enemy air raids on Britain at night again had Southampton as their main objective (the total casualties for nights 31st Nov./1st Dec. and 1st/2nd Dec. were some 370 civilians killed or seriously injured). Bombs were dropped in London and the Home Counties.

Some enemy fighters and fighter-bombers flew over England during the day but no bombs were dropped. Two fighters were shot down; we lost one, but the pilot was saved.

An R.A.F. aircraft bombed a German supply ship off the Norwegian coast.

**The Admiralty announced the loss of H.M. destroyer "Sturdy," wrecked on the Scottish coast. Five ratings lost their lives.**

The Greek operations in Albania progressed in spite of bad weather. The R.A.F. bombed Valona and at night attacked with success Naples and the aerodromes at Catania and Augusta (Sicily).

Italian aircraft bombed Corfu.

In Eritrea the R.A.F. bombed Fort Adi Ugri, where considerable loss was inflicted upon motor transport and personnel, and Zula.

At night the R.A.F. attacked shipping off the Norwegian coast and bombed the wharves at Feje island (40 miles North-West of Bergen).

The submarine base at Lorient was also attacked.

3rd December.—Bristol was the chief objective of enemy air raids on Britain during the night, damage and casualties being caused. Bombs were dropped in East Anglia, South Wales and at other points without doing much harm.

During the day a number of enemy fighters and fighter-bombers flew over England. Bombs were dropped in the outskirts of London, Sussex, East Anglia and the West of England.

The R.A.F. bombed by daylight a number of German aerodromes in Northern France.

In Albania the Greeks captured new positions North of Pogradetz, taking prisoners and guns. The R.A.F. continued to co-operate with the Greek forces and destroyed two Italian aircraft in the Premeti area.

Italian aircraft bombed the open Greek towns of Philatra, Preveza and Lefkas.

H.Q. R.A.F., Cairo, reported that the Italians occupying Kassala (Sudan) had been heavily bombed; Rhodesian aircraft had attacked a camp at Adardeb (Abyssinia).

On the Egyptian front the R.A.F. carried out night attacks upon El Adem, Sollum and Sidi Barani. Motor transport between Sollum and Bardia (Libya) was also bombed.

Bad weather restricted the R.A.F. operations against Germany at night, but attacks were made on Ludwigshaven and Mannheim, a blast furnace at Essen, and the port of Dunkirk. One of our aircraft was lost.

December 4th.—Enemy aircraft attacked London and the Midlands during the night, but casualties and damage were not heavy. A few bombs were dropped elsewhere in southern districts.

Some casualties and damage were caused by bombs dropped on Dover in the afternoon. An enemy bomber was shot down over the Dutch coast.

In Albania the Greeks occupied Premeti, capturing more prisoners and guns, and crushed Italian resistance in the mountains West of Pogradetz. One Italian aircraft was shot down by Greek fighters.

**The R.A.F. shot down some ten aircraft over the enemy lines ;** bombed retreating Italian troops in the Tepelini-Keleyre region and on the road to Berat ; and hit an Italian destroyer off Santi Quaranta.

Rhodesian aircraft were reported to have raided an Italian base at Chilga (Abyssinia) with success. Adarti railway station and rolling stock near were bombed and badly damaged. One aircraft was lost.

At night the R.A.F. attacked with success objectives at Düsseldorf ; the ports of Antwerp and Calais ; and several German aerodromes, searchlights, and gun positions.

Industrial targets at Turin (Italy) were also bombed during the night and much destruction caused. One of our aircraft was lost.

5th December.—Enemy aircraft dropped bombs near London and in the Midlands at night, but damage was small and casualties few.

Daylight air-raids over Kent caused little harm, **the enemy fighters and fighter-bombers being driven off with the loss of fourteen aircraft**, one shot down by A.-A. fire. Two of our fighters, but only one pilot, were lost.

German guns opened on Dover about dusk and our guns replied. Shelling continued for about two hours. No casualties or damage were reported.

The R.A.F. bombed the electro-chemical factory at Eindhoven, the Rotterdam airport, the Haamstede aerodrome, and the submarine base at Lorient in the course of the day.

H.M. armed merchant cruiser "Carnarvon Castle" engaged a fast and heavily armed German raider, disguised as a merchant ship, in the South Atlantic. The action was fought at long range and lasted 90 minutes. The enemy, who was hit repeatedly, eventually fled North at high speed, using a smoke-screen. H.M.S. "Carnarvon Castle" sustained slight damage and some casualties.

The Admiralty announced the loss through damage whilst engaged in mine-sweeping of H.M. trawlers "Ethel Taylor," "Amethyst" (no casualties), "Elk" (no casualties) and "Calverton," and H.M. drifter "Christmas Rose."

Offensive operations carried out by the South African Air Force included the bombing of Neghelli (Abyssinia) and Moyale (Kenya).

It was reported from Australia that nineteen mines had been removed from Bass Strait where mine-sweeping operations continued.

Owing to bad weather the R.A.F. night offensive against Germany was suspended.

6th December.—The main attack delivered by enemy aircraft during the night was on a South Coast district, where damage and casualties were caused. Bombs were dropped in London, South-East England and East Anglia without doing much harm.

Slight damage was caused by bombs dropped in an East Coast town; otherwise no enemy aircraft activity was reported over England during the day.

Reports from Greece showed that the offensive in Albania was still making progress along the whole front. Greek forces had occupied Santi Quaranta, an Italian destroyer half sunk by air attack being found in the port. The R.A.F. again bombed Valona.

Italian aircraft bombed the town of Corfu with little effect.

The weather in the Western Desert was too bad for R.A.F. operations.

On the Sudan border Rhodesian aircraft attacked Italian motor-transport North of Kassala. In the Kassala and Gallabat

regions British ground patrols had successful engagements with the enemy.

The R.A.F. made a successful raid upon Assab (Eritrea) and upon motor transport near the port.

At night the R.A.F. delivered concentrated attacks upon the bases used by the enemy for air raids on Britain. Extensive damage was done to aerodromes over a wide area of northern France, including those round Paris and at Chartres and Chateaudun, and to others in Belgium and Holland. Some were bombed several times. The ports of Dunkirk, Calais and Boulogne were also attacked, and in these operations two of our aircraft were lost.

7th December.—Night air raids on Britain chiefly concentrated upon Bristol, where considerable damage was done and casualties occurred. Some bombs were dropped in the South of England and in South Wales.

During the day enemy aircraft dropped bombs at one place in East Anglia, doing slight damage. Two of the enemy were shot down by our fighters.

The Greek successes in Albania continued, Delvino and Argyrokastro with considerable quantities of stores and material being captured. The R.A.F. attacked enemy shipping off the Albanian coast, hitting one vessel, and severely bombed Valona.

The R.A.F. bombed with success the Italian aerodrome at Asmara (Eritrea).

At night the R.A.F. made a surprise attack upon the large Italian air-base at Castel Benito, near the port of Tripoli (Western Libya), where hangars and other buildings and many Italian aircraft were destroyed.

The R.A.F. night offensive against Germany consisted of a concentrated attack upon industrial targets in the Düsseldorf area where much destruction was wrought. The naval shipyards and docks at Lorient and Brest were also bombed with good effect. Four of our aircraft were lost.

• There was no enemy aircraft activity over Britain at night.

Germany's nightly air offensives against Britain now seemed to aim at reducing our armament production by concentrated attacks upon our industrial centres. So far the success of these raids had been small, while there was plenty of evidence to show that the attacks of the R.A.F. upon Germany had already resulted in the destruction of vital war supplies, particularly oil. Enemy attacks upon our shipping, the other



serious factor, had resulted, during the week ended 24th/25th November, in the loss of 19 ships (75,560 tons); and three Allied vessels (12,415 tons) were also sunk. To the continued loss of merchant tonnage might be ascribed the warning to our people that food restrictions were liable to be increased. There were reports that the United States shipyards would be able to supply us with 60 fast freighters of 10,000 tons each, but this increment could not relieve the present situation. Germany continued to employ with the utmost intensity such methods of sea-warfare as remained open to her. In addition to the submarine campaign, her persistent efforts to mine our ports and the approaches thereto still caused many casualties to our "little ships" which successfully performed the never-ending task of mine-sweeping in narrow waters. German surface-raiders were reported in Australian seas and in the North and South Atlantic, their number and character not yet ascertained.

Considering the nature of the country and the bad weather, with the consequent difficulties of supply, the progress of the Greeks in Albania had fulfilled all legitimate expectations. The capture of Santi Quaranta, Delvino and Argyrokastro and fresh successes North and North-West of Pogradetz, seemed to threaten a veritable disaster to the Italian arms. It was a source of satisfaction to know that the R.A.F. was giving indispensable assistance in the Greek campaign.

Changes in the Italian command indicated serious dissensions in Rome. On the 6th December Marshal Badoglio, Italian Commander-in-Chief, "resigned at his own request." He did good work in the war of 1914-18, added to his reputation as the victor of Abyssinia, and might be accounted Italy's ablest soldier; he was never an ardent Fascist like his successor, General Ugo Cavallero. General de Vecchi, commanding in the Dodecanese, resigned on the 7th December, also "at his own request." He is a prominent Fascist politician; General Bastico, his successor, was in command of Italian troops in Spain. It appears that a scapegoat had to be found for the disasters in the Greek war: the Fascist Government probably asked the impossible of the Army Command, and continued to do so in the face of defeat.

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8th December.—No enemy aircraft ventured over Britain during the day. One fighter-bomber was shot down in the Channel.

The German guns on the French coast opened on Dover for a short period about noon and fired again in the early evening.

At night the R.A.F. delivered a most destructive attack upon the aerodrome at Benina (Libya).

Operating from Aden the R.A.F. bombed the Jibuti-Addis Ababa railway near the frontier of French Somaliland. The port of Assab (Eritrea) was also attacked.

An official report from the U.S. Navy Department stated that the German freighter "Idarwald," which had left Tampico in an attempt to run the blockade, was on fire off Cuba after an attempt by her crew to scuttle her when approached by a British cruiser.

At night the R.A.F. renewed their attacks upon the Düsseldorf industrial area. The submarine base at Lorient; the shipping and harbour installations at Bordeaux and Brest; the ports of Flushing, Dunkirk and Gravelines; and several enemy aerodromes were also bombed. Two of our aircraft were lost.

9th December.—German bombers made a heavy attack upon London during the night, causing damage and casualties. Other localities in the South of England also suffered. Two enemy bombers were destroyed.

No enemy aircraft appeared over Britain during the day. One bomber was shot down in the North Sea by R.A.F. fighters in the afternoon.

**Operations against the Italians began in Egypt.** British forces, which had begun their advance during the night of the 7th-8th attacked at dawn when they obtained contact with the enemy over a wide front from Sidi Barani southward. In the assault of one defended locality (Mabeya) 500 prisoners were taken and the Italian commander killed; good progress was made in the attack on a second locality; and British forces penetrated as far as the coast between Sidi Barani and Buqbuq, taking prisoners and material. Troops of the Free French forces took part in the operations.

Working in close co-operation with the Army, the R.A.F. harassed enemy troops all day, raided the enemy aerodromes, and attacked Benina, Sidi Barani, Sollum and Bardia. **Twenty-two Italian aircraft were reported to have been destroyed;** we lost three, but only one pilot.

Part of the Mediterranean Fleet had also participated, naval units carrying out a bombardment of Maktala Camp and Sidi Barani during the night 8th-9th December.

In Albania the Greek advance continued, important positions in the mountains on the northern front being captured. Behind Santi Quaranta the Italians were in full retreat along the coast.

The London headquarters of the Royal Netherlands Navy announced the loss in action of a Dutch submarine.

Rhodesian aircraft were reported to have carried out a successful attack upon Adardeb (Abyssinia).

At night the R.A.F. bombed an aircraft factory at Bremen, the naval base at Lorient, and the docks at Boulogne. One of our aircraft was lost; one German fighter was shot down.

There were no air raids on Britain during the night.

10th December.—A few bombs were dropped by enemy aircraft on Kent and Essex during the day, the damage being slight and the casualties few.

The Egyptian offensive continued successfully; the number of prisoners was reported to exceed 4,000 and a number of tanks were captured. The R.A.F., in the course of continuous operations, bombarded all the Italian aerodromes in the Libyan desert and, acting in close support of the Army, delivered repeated attacks upon enemy camps, troops and transport. About twelve enemy aircraft were shot down or destroyed on the ground, some by a squadron of the Royal Australian Air Force. Aircraft of the Fleet Air Arm assisted in the attacks on barracks at Bardia and on the escarpment road at Sollum. Only one of our aircraft was lost.

Greek progress in Albania, though slow, was maintained, the Italians suffering heavy losses. The R.A.F. attacked Valona, where a ship was hit and buildings, an ammunition dump, and motor transport were bombed. Our aircraft suffered no loss.

On the Sudan frontier Rhodesian aircraft successfully bombed an enemy position in the region of Kassala and enemy troops and transport North-East of Metemma.

H.M. Canadian destroyer "Saguenay" was officially reported to have been damaged by submarine torpedo attack in the East Atlantic. Twenty-one ratings were missing and eighteen wounded.

Despite unfavourable weather conditions, the R.A.F. carried out a night offensive against railway junctions, a power station, aerodromes and inland docks in Western Germany and in German-occupied territory. The docks at a number of Channel ports were also attacked. Two of our bombers were lost; one German fighter was shot down.

11th December.—There was little air activity over England during the night. Bombs dropped in East Anglia caused some damage and casualties.

Small numbers of enemy aircraft flew over the Channel and the South-East Coast of England during the day. Bombs caused damage and casualties in one town. One enemy aircraft was shot down.

**In Egypt the British operations proceeded successfully.** The number of prisoners amounted to more than 6,000, and many more were taken when Sidi Barani was occupied in the afternoon. Here an Italian corps commander and two divisional commanders surrendered. The R.A.F. continued to harass the enemy retreat, attacking troops withdrawing along the coast road to Sollum and bombing incessantly the Italian advanced aerodromes. Eight (probably more) Italian aircraft were shot down and others were destroyed on the ground. Only one of our aircraft was lost. At night Tobruk harbour and town was heavily bombed.

The Fleet continued to bombard the Italians retreating along the coast, particularly on the roads round Sollum.

In Albania the Greeks made further progress, capturing more prisoners and material. Italian aircraft bombed Corfu and a Greek village, doing little harm.

Aircraft of the South African and Rhodesian Air Forces carried out extensive raids upon the Italian aerodromes in Abyssinia.

In West Indian waters the crew of the German merchant ship "Rhein" set her on fire and scuttled her on being intercepted by a Dutch warship.

The R.A.F. carried out an intensive night attack on Mannheim, despite unfavourable weather. The docks at Calais, Boulogne and Etaples were heavily bombed, as were a number of enemy aerodromes.

12th December.—During the night enemy aircraft delivered a concentrated attack upon Birmingham, causing considerable damage and many casualties. Elsewhere there was little activity. One German bomber was destroyed.

Enemy fighters and fighter-bombers appeared over the Kent coast in the morning and bombs were dropped in South-East England and on the outskirts of London. Four German aircraft were shot down.

H.M. drifter "Evening Primrose" shot down a German aircraft which attacked her in the North Sea.

The docks at Brest were bombed by the R.A.F. in the evening ; and, off the Dutch coast, one enemy supply ship was bombed and hit.

In Egypt, the westward withdrawal of the Italians was followed up energetically by the British forces. It was estimated that **more than 20,000 of the enemy had now been captured**, together with tanks, guns and equipment of all types.

The R.A.F. maintained their attacks upon enemy troops, communications and aerodromes. Many Italian aircraft were destroyed in the air or on the ground, the Royal Australian Air Force shooting down three. More than twelve Italian aerodromes and landing grounds were raided.

The Fleet continued to bombard the Italians retreating along the coast, and also Sollum-Bardia.

The Greek advance in Albania still made headway. Valona, so often bombed by the R.A.F., was reported to have been rendered useless owing to the destruction caused in the harbour.

The Admiralty announced that naval units had bombarded Kismayu (Italian Somaliland), damaging supplies.

Owing to the unfavourable weather the R.A.F. carried out no night attacks upon Germany.

13th December.—German aircraft made a concentrated attack upon Sheffield during the night. Considerable damage was done and many casualties caused. Few bombs were dropped elsewhere.

There were no daylight raids on Britain.

The Admiralty announced that whilst operating in Norwegian waters **H.M. submarine "Sunfish" had sunk a German supply ship** (probably carrying iron ore) and damaged a tanker.

**The loss was announced of H.M. armed merchant cruiser "Forfar," which had sunk after being torpedoed.**

In Egypt the British advanced troops continued to press the retreating Italians. The number of prisoners increased, two more divisional commanders being captured.

The R.A.F. continued without respite to attack Italian aerodromes, landing grounds and fuel dumps ; also operating in close support of the Army. Derna, Bardia, Gubbi, Gambut, El Tmimmi and Bomba (all in Libya) were among the places raided ;



**fifteen Italian aircraft were shot down** for the loss of four Gladiators from which three of the pilots escaped by parachute; on the Tobruk-Bardia road our eight-gun fighters took heavy toll of the enemy. One of our bombers previously reported missing returned safely.

The fleet continued to co-operate by shelling the retreating enemy in the coastal area. At night the Fleet Air Arm attacked the harbour of Tripoli and did considerable damage to shipping.

The Greek advance in Albania made further progress, especially in the coastal sector, where Porto Palermo (15 miles North-West of Santi Quaranta) was reported to have been occupied. The Italians concentrated about Tepelini had begun their retreat down the valley of the Viosa.

R.A.F. operations over Eritrea and Abyssinia included the bombing of Gura, Asmara, Diredawa and Mai Adaga.

At night the R.A.F., despite difficult weather conditions, attacked the shipbuilding yards at Kiel; factories and other targets at Bremen; docks and aerodromes in Holland; and the German submarine base at Bordeaux. None of our aircraft was lost.

14th December.—There was little enemy aircraft activity over England during the night. Bombs dropped in East Coast districts caused some damage and casualties.

Daylight air raids on England were on a small scale. Bombs dropped at a place in the West Midlands caused damage and casualties.

**In Egypt** the Italians, still under heavy pressure from the British advanced troops, endeavoured to make a stand on the Libyan frontier. **Prisoners now amounted to over 26,000,** and the amount of captured war material continued to increase.

The R.A.F. continued to act in close co-operation with the Army and to strike at the Libyan aerodromes and bases of the enemy. Bardia was heavily bombed in spite of the efforts of enemy aircraft to protect it, and Derna and Sollum were attacked. **Twenty-six, probably more, Italian aircraft were shot down** for the loss of one bomber, one fighter and one reconnaissance machine.

An Admiralty communique stated that the Fleet continued to co-operate by bombarding the coastal road. An attack by Italian motor torpedo boats had been beaten off without loss; **our**

destroyers had sunk the enemy submarine "Naiada"; and units of the Fleet Air Arm had shared in the operations of the R.A.F.

In Albania the Greek advance continued to progress with the capture of more prisoners and war material. The R.A.F. bombed Valona twice, besides co-operating closely with the Greek forces.

Naples was heavily attacked by R.A.F. bombers at night, damage being caused to warships in the harbour, the aerodrome and railway communications.

The R.A.F. carried out effective night attacks upon Italian bases and aerodromes in Eritrea and Abyssinia.

At night the R.A.F. attacked the enemy occupied ports of Brest and Lorient. None of our aircraft was lost.

German air raids on England during the night resulted in some damage and casualties in a town on the Thames estuary. Enemy aircraft were reported over Northern Ireland, but no bombs were dropped.

The decisive defeat of the Italians by the British and Imperial forces in Egypt was remarkable for the admirable co-operation between our land, sea and air forces, and the effective handling of our armoured units. Starting on the night of the 7th-8th December the Army made contact with the main Italian forces at dawn on the 9th, and appeared to have taken them by surprise. A holding attack, suddenly developed from the East against Sidi Barani, enabled our tanks to make a sweeping movement over the desert to reach the coast near Buqbuq; and the enemy's defended localities thus enclosed appear to have been reduced in detail. By the end of the week the Italians had been driven in disorder back to the Libyan frontier where fighting continued. They had lost over 30,000 prisoners and a huge quantity of war material and supplies.

The changes in the Italian military command had been followed on the 8th December by the appointment of Admiral Jachini to command the Fleet at sea, whilst Admiral Cavagnari, Chief of the Italian Naval Staff, resigned "at his own request" and was succeeded by Admiral Riccardi.

The serious reverse to Italian arms in North Africa, following upon the Greek victories in Albania, had an excellent effect upon those Balkan states which were not already under German domination. It seemed more than ever certain that Germany would be obliged to choose some way of helping her ally; and might adopt the method of redoubling her efforts by sea and air against Britain herself.

It was reported on the 11th December that detachments of the Free French forces had completely occupied the French frontier zone between Chad and Libya, which should have been demilitarized under the terms of the Franco-Italian armistice.

In Albania by the end of the week the Italians were falling back by the coast road, and also north-westward from the Telepini area, towards Valona. Their resistance had stiffened somewhat, but it was now doubtful if they could retain Valona, although the bad weather had slowed up the Greek advance and limited the amount of support which the R.A.F. could lend the ground forces. The Greeks' official estimate of Italian losses was 200 officers and 7,000 other ranks taken prisoner (plus those yet to be counted) and 120 heavy guns and a vast quantity of other weapons and equipment captured.

On the night of the 12th-13th December two Italian submarines which, in a damaged state, had taken refuge at Tangier during the early days of November, left the port. Next day the self-constituted Spanish military governor superseded the international civil administration and assumed direct control of the zone. There was ground for believing that this action had been taken by Spain on her own initiative.

During the week ended 1st-2nd December, nine British Merchant ships (total tonnage 41,360), three Allied ships (5,734) and one neutral (5,135) were sunk by enemy action. The total tonnage, below the weekly average (62,000) for 65 weeks of the war, was far too heavy to be viewed with equanimity.

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15th December.—There were no air raids on Britain during the day.

In Egypt the Italian retreat, under the continued pressure of our forces, reached the Libyan frontier where fighting proceeded amid dust storms. The frontier forts of Musaid, Sidi Omar and Shefferzen were captured. The R.A.F. continued their attacks against the Italian aerodromes and bases in Libya, making a heavy raid upon Bardia at night.

The Greek advance in Albania made slow but steady progress, with further captures of men and material. The weather was too bad for R.A.F. bombing operations.

In Eritrea the R.A.F. carried out successful night raids on Gura and Asmara.

Marshal Pétain announced in a broadcast speech that he had dismissed M. Laval, who was succeeded as Foreign Minister by M. Flandin. The office of Vice-Premier remained vacant.

At night R.A.F. operations included extensive attacks upon the Berlin area. Other targets were Frankfort-on-Main, Kiel shipyards, and the port of Bremen. Two enemy merchant vessels observed off the French coast were hit. We lost three aircraft.

16th December.—Night attacks of the German air force concentrated upon Sheffield, where much damage was done and many casualties occurred. Bombs also fell in the London area and in other parts of the country.

Enemy air activity over Britain during the day was on a very small scale. A few bombs were dropped in East Anglia and in South-East England.

Daylight attacks were made by the R.A.F. on enemy aerodromes; six enemy merchant vessels, seen off the French coast, were bombed.

Fighting continued on the Libyan frontier in dust storms which gave place to rain. In the afternoon our forces occupied Sollum and Fort Capuzzo, capturing some aircraft on the ground. Altogether **twenty-five Italian aircraft were accounted for**, the R.A.F. fully maintaining their ascendancy in the air.

In Albania the Greeks carried out successfully a number of local operations. In spite of very unfavourable weather the R.A.F. bombed Durazzo at night with great effect.

Assab (Eritrea) was raided at night by the R.A.F. The Italians were reported to have made four air-raids on Port Sudan without doing much damage.

British forces from Kenya, including South African and Gold Coast units, raided the post of El Wak (Italian Somaliland frontier). Seventy-five prisoners, three guns and a quantity of equipment were captured and fifty of the enemy were killed; our losses were slight. The South African Air Forces lent valuable support in this operation.

At night the R.A.F. carried out an intensive attack upon the industrial districts of Mannheim and Ludwigshafen where very extensive damage was done. Bordeaux submarine base was bombed. Our day's total loss in aircraft was four.

17th December.—Enemy air-raids during the night were on a small scale. London, North-West England and the Midlands were bombed and some damage and casualties were caused.

Although one German bomber was shot down over Britain there were no reports of bombing during the day.

Fighting continued on the Libyan frontier, considerable British reinforcements entering the battle. Bad weather hindered R.A.F. activities, but at night Benina aerodrome was very heavily attacked.

The chief Greek advance in Albania was towards Klisura, though prisoners were captured on other parts of the front.

Aircraft of the Fleet Air Arm attacked, under bad weather conditions, Rhodes, Stampalia and Scarpanto in the Dodecanese. All our aircraft returned safely.

17th December.—At night R.A.F. bombers again visited Mannheim and district, adding to the destruction previously caused.

No enemy aircraft were reported over Britain during the night.

In the early morning **our motor torpedo boats attacked and sank an enemy supply ship** (6–7,000 tons) off the Belgian coast; an armed trawler, acting as escort, was damaged.

A German bomber was shot down at Dover in the afternoon; otherwise no enemy aircraft were reported over England.

On the Libyan frontier operations round Bardia proceeded. The R.A.F. bombed heavily the Bardia-Tobruk road, and at night Bardia and Derna were attacked from the air.

In southern Albania the Greeks continued their progress towards Klisura, Tepelini and Chimara. Valona and Krionero were heavily bombed by the R.A.F.

Rhodesian aircraft bombed enemy aircraft and troops in the Metemma area, and other aircraft attacked Jebel Serobatib (30 miles North-East of Kassala).

At night a cruiser and destroyer force under Vice-Admiral H D. Pridham-Wippell swept the Adriatic Sea as far North as Bari-Durazzo. No enemy shipping was seen. **A force of battleships under the Commander-in-Chief passed through the Straits of Otranto and bombarded Valona**, using nearly 100 tons of H.E. shell.

At night the R.A.F. bombed the industrial district of Mannheim for the third time. The submarine base at Lorient was also attacked.

A factory at Milan, the docks at Genoa, and an aerodrome in Northern Italy were also bombed by the R.A.F.

In all these night operations none of our aircraft was lost.



19th December.—There was little enemy air activity over Britain during daylight and no reports of bombing. One enemy aircraft was shot down by our fighters off the South-West Coast.

A surprise attack by a single aircraft of our Coastal Command scored a direct hit on a hangar at Le Touquet aerodrome. Maupertus aerodrome, near Cherbourg, was also bombed.

The Italian forces within the fortified area of Bardia were now reported to be completely contained. Italian prisoners, actually counted, amounted to 31,546 (including 1,626 officers) and several more thousands were being evacuated from the battle zone.

In Albania the Greek advance was hampered by snow and fog. At night the R.A.F. made a successful attack upon oil tanks and railways at Brindisi.

In bad weather the R.A.F. made night attacks upon Western Germany, bombing important objectives in the Duisberg area, Düsseldorf, Essen and Bonn. The Bergen-Oslo railway (Norway) was also attacked with success. None of our aircraft was lost.

20th December.—At night enemy aircraft dropped bombs in South and South-East England, causing few casualties and little damage.

The R.A.F. made daylight raids upon a number of aerodromes and harbours in enemy-occupied territory. Gun positions near Cap Gris Nez were attacked, and a direct hit was obtained upon a supply ship.

There was slight enemy activity by single enemy aircraft over Britain during the day. A few bombs were dropped in the London area without much effect.

No change was reported in the situation at Bardia (Libyan frontier) where considerable Italian forces continued to resist. In the battle zone the R.A.F. shot down at least five enemy aircraft, and at night bombed the aerodromes at Benghazi, Berka, and Castel Benito. The Fleet Air Arm made a successful attack on the harbour at Tripoli.

In Albania the Greeks made progress after sharp fighting. More than 600 Italians were captured. The R.A.F. bombed Berat.

The R.A.F. carried out a night raid on Asmara (Eritrea).

At night the R.A.F. carried out a long and accurate bombing of factories, goods yards and railways in Berlin. The Ruhr and the "invasion ports" were also attacked, particularly good results being observed at Ostend, Antwerp and Le Havre.

21st December.—During the night enemy aircraft were reported over many parts of Britain, but the chief attack was on Merseyside, where the Liverpool area suffered considerable damage and casualties.

There was little enemy air activity over Britain by day, but three German aircraft were shot down.

British forces continued to clear the areas North-West and West of Bardia where, it was estimated, some 20,000 Italians were invested. Additional prisoners amounted to 900, with four guns.

In the afternoon **the Fleet Air Arm attacked with torpedoes a convoy of three merchant ships** escorted by a destroyer. One vessel of 3,000 tons was seen to blow up; another of 6,000 tons was sunk. We lost one aircraft.

At night the R.A.F. bombed the aerodromes at Berka and Benina, and also the harbour and other objectives at Tobruk.

In Albania the Greek forces were reported to have made good progress in the region of Tepelini, where a considerable number of prisoners were captured. During an encounter over Argyrokastro nine R.A.F. fighters shot down eight, probably eleven, Italian machines out of 50. Two of our aircraft were lost.

**The night offensive of the R.A.F. was on a particularly large scale.** Oil plants, factories, inland docks, railways and aerodromes in the Ruhr and the Rhineland were bombed with great effect; the docks and harbours of Rotterdam, Flushing, Antwerp, Ostend and Calais were hit and damaged; and another attack was made upon the Oslo-Bergen railway (Norway).

In addition, long distance bombers bombed the oil refineries at Porto Marghera, near Venice.

Merseyside again bore the brunt of the enemy air attacks on Britain during the night, and casualties as well as damage by fire resulted. Bombs were also dropped in the London area and in other parts of England and Wales. Two enemy bombers were destroyed over Merseyside.

It was not yet possible to gauge the full extent of the victory in Egypt where all continued to go well. The Italian forces invested at Bardia, harassed by land, air and sea, seemed to be in a hopeless situation. The total casualties in the British Army up to the 16th December were announced by Mr. Churchill on the 19th to be less than 1,000 killed and wounded.

Some details of the admirable support afforded by the Fleet were made known during the week. Since the British advance started, light

and heavy naval units had been almost continuously in action, carrying out bombardments of the Italian coastal positions and communications, supplying our advanced troops, and taking off prisoners. On the 17th one of our "light units" penetrated into the inner harbour at Bardia to engage the enemy at close range, and sank three supply ships. Operating against the enemy's sea communications, H.M. submarine "Truant" was reported to have attacked a heavily-escorted convoy of supply ships on the night 13th-14th December and sunk one, probably two. Two nights later the "Truant" sank a large enemy tanker.

The Fleet Air Arm had supplemented the efforts of the R.A.F. It was officially announced that from the 7th to the 19th December no less than 144 Italian aircraft had been accounted for, 88 shot down and the rest either destroyed on the ground or captured. We had lost 13, but five of the pilots were saved; and between the 15th and 19th December not one of our machines was lost.

In Albania, where both the nature of the country and the wintry weather were unfavourable for offensive action, the steady progress of the Greeks was the reward of their wonderful tenacity and endurance. The R.A.F. had shot down 39 Italian aircraft, probably twelve more, for the loss of nine; Valona had been raided 18 and Durazzo eight times.

Italian uneasiness regarding the attitude of French North Africa was easy to understand, and there were indications that Germany had considered it necessary to put pressure upon the Vichy Government. M. Laval, at first reported to be under open arrest, was obviously still a factor to be reckoned with, since he seemed to be assured of German support. The Nazi Government openly expressed its resentment at the increasing assistance which the British Empire was receiving from the U.S.A. Meanwhile Mr. Churchill had again warned the nation of the need for unrelenting vigilance as the danger of invasion was not past. The air raid casualties in Britain during November were announced as 4,588 killed and 6,202 seriously injured.

During the week ended 8th-9th December, 19 British ships (total tonnage 86,470), three Allied (12,937 tons) and one neutral (1,513 tons) were sunk by enemy action. The depredations of German mines, submarines, aircraft and surface raiders could still be accounted the most serious problem with which we were faced. Fortunately our protective flotillas and forces of all kinds were steadily increasing. In reinforcing our concentrations in the Middle East, and in assisting Greece, our Merchant Navy had played a notable and essential part, fortunately with little or no loss.

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22nd December.—At dawn the R.A.F. attacked the dockyard at Wilhelmshaven and the enemy bases at Brest and Lorient.

Enemy aircraft dropped bombs in the West of Scotland at dawn, otherwise no enemy activity by daylight was reported over Britain.

The British round Bardia continued to be reinforced. Seven more Italian guns were brought in. Benina aerodrome was bombed by the R.A.F. at night.

It was reported from Athens that a Greek destroyer flotilla had reconnoitred the Adriatic well beyond the island of Saseno (off Valona), without sighting any Italian vessels.

The R.A.F. bombed the oil wells at Kucove in Central Albania.

At night the R.A.F. bombed Mannheim and Ludwigshafen again. Other targets in the Rhineland were attacked, also Flushing, Dunkirk and Calais and aerodromes in enemy-occupied territory. One of our aircraft was lost.

Enemy aircraft bombed the Liverpool area for the third successive night, but the brunt of the attack fell upon Manchester, where many fires caused much damage in the city, and a considerable number of casualties resulted.

23rd December.—Bombs were also dropped in the East Midlands and other districts. Three enemy bombers were shot down.

Enemy air activity by daylight was confined to attack by single machines at a few points on the East Coast of England. Little damage and very few casualties were caused. An enemy bomber was destroyed over the South Coast.

On the Libyan front the R.A.F. shot down three Italian bombers and one fighter and, at night, bombed Castel Benito and Tripoli with great effect.

Our artillery continued to harass the Italian defences at Bardia, whilst preparations for more decisive action were pushed forward. No less than 35,949 Italian prisoners had been evacuated from the battle area and many thousands more had yet to be disposed of.

The Greeks reported the occupation of the coastal town of Chimara with the capture of a Blackshirt battalion and much material.

The night offensive of the R.A.F. was directed upon Boulogne, Dunkirk and Ostend, also industrial targets in the Rhineland, including Ludwigshafen. One of our aircraft came down in the sea and the crew were lost.



24th December.—At night enemy aircraft activity was concentrated mainly upon North-West England. Fires were started at a number of places but casualties were not heavy. London and a town on the South Coast also suffered in some degree.

No change was reported in the situation at Bardia. Italian aircraft bombed Sollum, causing a number of casualties. The R.A.F. bombed the enemy aerodromes at Tmimi and Gazala.

In Albania the R.A.F. made a heavy raid upon Valona, bombing the aerodrome and harbour with good effect and attacking an Italian cruiser with machine-gun fire.

The Greek submarine "Papanikolis" encountered an Italian convoy in the Adriatic and sank three large enemy troopships.

25th December.—In the morning a powerful enemy warship attempted to attack one of our convoys in the North Atlantic. One ship in the convoy was slightly damaged, but the escort engaged the enemy at long range, hitting him amidships as he fled and probably inflicting other damage. H.M. cruiser "Berwick" sustained slight damage and five casualties. During the pursuit the German steamship "Baden" was intercepted, but set herself on fire and had to be sunk by our warships.

H.M. The King broadcast to the Empire.

An enemy aircraft was shot down over the Orkneys by fighters of the Fleet Air Arm.

British and Spanish anti-aircraft batteries opened fire upon an unidentified aeroplane seen to be approaching Gibraltar. Later the aeroplane was seen to crash into the sea East of La Linea.

In Albania Greek pressure was exerted towards Lin, North of Pogradetz. An Italian aircraft which attacked the town of Corfu killed many civilians. The R.A.F. dropped Christmas gifts for the children on Corfu.

26th December.—In the afternoon an enemy aircraft dropped bombs on the Isle of Sheppey with little effect.

The situation around Bardia was unchanged. Australian fighters shot down two Italian aircraft and seriously damaged four others. At night the R.A.F. bombed Tobruk.

In Albania the R.A.F. bombed Krionero. The Italians in the coastal sector continued their retreat northwards and eastwards from the vicinity of Chimara.



At night the R.A.F. attacked Merignac aerodrome near Bordeaux, enemy-occupied aerodromes in Brittany, and shipping at Le Tréport.

27th December.—Before daylight German guns on the French coast shelled Dover but caused no damage.

A solitary enemy aircraft dropped bombs on a town in South-East England causing some damage and minor casualties.

Daylight operations of the R.A.F. included the bombing of the submarine base at Lorient and of enemy-occupied aerodromes in Brittany.

Skua aircraft of the Fleet Air Arm attacked enemy shipping and harbour works at Haugesund (Norway). One vessel of 4,000 tons was hit and set on fire; bombs burst on jetties and warehouses. None of our aircraft was lost.

In the afternoon an R.A.F. bomber scored three simultaneous hits upon a 4,000-ton German supply vessel at anchor at Egersund, South of Stavanger (Norway).

On the Libyan front the R.A.F. shot down two, probably three, Italian aircraft and damaged several others. An Italian air attack on Sollum caused only slight damage.

In Southern Albania the R.A.F. bombed with success shipping at Valona and military objectives on the foreshore.

A German raider which approached under Japanese colours shelled the phosphate works on the island of Nauru in the South Pacific.

A night raid on London by enemy aircraft lasted several hours. Incendiary and high-explosive bombs were dropped, causing damage and casualties. Bombs were dropped also in East Anglia, South-East England, and at one point on the South Coast, starting fires and causing some casualties.

28th December.—During the night the R.A.F. attacked Merignac aerodrome, near Bordeaux; the submarine base at Lorient; the docks at Cherbourg; St. Inglevert aerodrome; and shipbuilding yards at St. Nazaire. Minelaying in enemy waters was continued.

The R.A.F. made two daylight attacks upon the submarine base at Lorient. All our aircraft returned safely.

The concentration of the British forces investing Bardia proceeded smoothly, also the clearance of the country to the westward. Four more guns were captured. Prisoners were announced to number 38,114 including 24,845 Italians.

In Albania the Greeks were reported to have made considerable progress on the Chimara-Valona road.

**The Italian High Command admitted that a submarine had failed to return to its base from Atlantic waters.**

The R.A.F. night offensive was made in bad weather against oil targets at Rotterdam and Antwerp and the ports of Boulogne and Cherbourg. Lorient was again bombed and a large fire was started.

Enemy action at night was principally concentrated upon a town in South-West England where considerable damage and many casualties resulted.

At the beginning of the week Lord Halifax was announced to be the new Ambassador to the U.S.A. in succession to the late Lord Lothian. Mr. Anthony Eden followed Lord Halifax as Foreign Secretary, and Captain D. Margesson, Chief Government Whip, replaced Mr. Eden at the War Office.

On the 23rd December, Mr. Churchill addressed to the Italian people a reasoned and impressive appeal which was also an indictment of Mussolini and the Fascist regime. Such an address would hardly have been made if the Premier and the British Government had not possessed the conviction that Italian morale was weakening in the face of defeat. No Italian could view with confidence the outcome of the pending operations against Bardia; the weather alone was responsible for the slowing down of the Greek advance in Albania; a large part of our fleet returned to Alexandria for Christmas after sweeping the Eastern Mediterranean without sight of an enemy ship; and there were growing signs of revolt in Abyssinia.

German negotiations with the Vichy Government remained secret, but the fate of the French Fleet seemed to be in question as well as that of North Africa. It remained to be seen what attempt, if any, Germany would make to intervene, on behalf of her partner, in the Mediterranean theatre.

Bad weather conditions at Christmastide made air operations over Britain and Germany all but impossible, and the almost total cessation of hostilities assumed the character of an informal truce. Speeches by Brauchitsch (German Commander-in-Chief) to the German Army and by Hess (Hitler's deputy) to the German people on Christmas Eve strove to maintain confidence by threatening the British Empire.

On Christmas Day H.M. The King voiced the calm confidence, felt by all his subjects, in ultimate victory.

During the week ending 15th-16th December five British (total tonnage 30,830), and two Allied merchant ships (10,646 tons) were sunk by enemy action, a very welcome reduction from the figures of the previous week.

Nauru is a British mandated island, its production of phosphates being of considerable value. The German raider, which hoisted German colours before opening fire, not only approached under the Japanese flag but was reported to have her name painted in Japanese characters. There was increasing evidence that German raiders were being equipped in Japanese ports for the purpose of preying upon our shipping in the South Pacific.

29th December.—During the day enemy aircraft dropped bombs at a place in North-West England, on a Suffolk coastal town, and on a town in Kent, causing some damage and casualties.

On the Libyan front the R.A.F. raided the Italian landing grounds at Tmimi, Derna, and Gazala. At night Gazala was again raided, and Tobruk, also, was bombed.

The Greeks reported further local successes in Albania with the capture of prisoners and material. Two raids were made on Valona by the R.A.F. with great success despite bad weather conditions. One of our aircraft was lost.

The R.A.F. carried out a raid upon the Italian motor transport repair shops at Dessye (Abyssinia).

The aerodrome at Bardera (Italian Somaliland) was successfully attacked by the South African Air Force.

The Thai High Command announced that hostilities upon a large scale had broken out upon the border of Indo-China between French and Thai troops.

President Roosevelt, in a "fireside talk" broadcast, expressed his firm conviction of a British victory and pointed out the extreme danger to the U.S.A. of a German triumph. "We must be the arsenal of the democracies."

In spite of bad weather the R.A.F. bombed "invasion" ports, enemy aerodromes, and a military objective in the Frankfurt area during the night.

A successful night raid was also carried out by the R.A.F. on Naples.

30th December.—At night enemy aircraft delivered a heavy attack upon London, concentrating mainly upon the City, where incendiary bombs were dropped indiscriminately. Great fires were caused, and among the buildings destroyed were the Guildhall, Trinity House, and many churches built by Wren. The loss of life was small; the German attack with high explosive bombs which began when the fires were raging, soon terminated, presumably on account of bad weather conditions.

During the day enemy aircraft dropped bombs at one point in East Anglia and at a place in Kent. The damage done was slight and the casualties few.

In Albania the Greeks continued to progress in the coastal sector towards Valona. Italian counter-attacks in the Tepelini and Klisura regions had been repulsed.

The R.A.F. shot down an Italian floatplane over the Leucas-Preveza area and two other enemy aircraft near Akra Poseidon.

In British Somaliland the R.A.F. bombed buildings alongside the landing ground at Zeila.

At night the R.A.F. bombed with success Taranto, Naples, Torre Annunziata, Palermo, and a chemical factory at Cotrone. At Taranto, Italian naval units were the objective.

31st December.—A few isolated attacks were made on England by enemy aircraft during daylight, some houses being damaged and a few people injured in Kent and Essex.

In spite of unfavourable weather the R.A.F. attacked targets in Germany and the Low Countries. A factory at Cologne was bombed, also objectives at Rotterdam and in the docks at Ijmuiden. Near Flushing an anti-aircraft ship was bombed and put out of action, and near Emmerich a bridge was destroyed.

On the Libyan front the R.A.F. bombed Italian troops and transport West of Bardia. At night the Italian aerodromes at Tmimi and Gazala were bombed.

In Albania, in the region of Chimara, the Greeks captured three more villages. The R.A.F. bombed Valona, causing much damage in spite of bad weather conditions; on the return journey our aircraft were engaged by Italian fighters, one of which was damaged. One of our aircraft failed to return to its base.

The Greek submarine "Katsonis," patrolling the Adriatic, shelled an Italian tanker, which was set on fire and driven ashore on the coast of Yugo-Slavia.

In Abyssinia the Italian camp and landing ground at Gubba was successfully attacked by the R.A.F., and fires were started as the result of a raid upon the enemy camp at Danghila. Assab (Eritrea) was bombed with good results.

1st January.—Enemy aircraft were reported over an East Anglian town and also North-West England during the afternoon. No bombs were dropped.

It was revealed that from Christmas onwards British armoured units had been operating as far to the westward in Libya as the Tobruk area. The bombardment of Bardia by land, sea and air continued.

The R.A.F. again bombed the Italian aerodromes at Tmimi and Gazala. Derna and Bardia were attacked at night, and two heavy raids were delivered upon shipping in the harbour at Tripoli.

In Albania fighting continued in deep snow among the mountains West of Lake Ochrida. The Greeks made further progress towards Valona-Berat.

A Rhodesian air squadron carried out destructive raids upon military objectives in Eritrea.

It was officially announced in Australia that units of the Royal Australian Navy, with an R.A.F. flying boat co-operating, had rescued from the island of Emirau in the Bismarck Archipelago nearly 500 people, survivors from British and other merchantmen which had been sunk by a German commerce raider in the Pacific.

Bremen was the main objective of the R.A.F. night operations. Shipyards, dockyards and the railway station were subjected to a concentrated discharge of incendiary and high explosive bombs. Large fires and explosions were seen. Ports in enemy-occupied territory, including Flushing, Ostend and Brest, were also attacked. None of our aircraft was lost.

At night a few bombs were dropped in London and enemy aircraft also appeared over the Midlands and the North-West. Incendiary bombs were dropped at several points in eastern England.

2nd January.—Unidentified aircraft dropped high explosive and incendiary bombs in various parts of Eire during the night. Houses in Dublin were damaged and people injured; fatal casualties occurred in County Carlow.

During daylight enemy aircraft dropped bombs on a town in Kent causing little damage and few casualties.



The Admiralty announced that H.M. submarine "Thunderbolt" had sunk an Italian submarine which was proceeding under escort to a base in enemy-occupied territory.

The British concentrations round Bardia continued without much interruption. The total of guns captured since the opening of the operations against the Italians in North Africa was stated to be 329.

It was officially announced in Rome that sections of the German Air Force had arrived in Italy to take part in the operations in the Mediterranean theatre of war.

In Albania the Greeks made further progress, notably towards the Tepelini—Valona road, and captured prisoners and guns. Elbasan was effectively bombed by the R.A.F.

At night Bremen was again subjected to a heavy attack by the R.A.F. carrying on the destruction of docks and communications. Other of our aircraft bombed oil targets in Emden and Amsterdam and a railway junction near Bremen. One of our bombers was lost.

3rd January.—In their night attacks upon Britain enemy aircraft again made great use of incendiary bombs. London, the eastern counties and South-West England all suffered damage and casualties, but Cardiff was the chief target. Many fires were caused and damage to property was extensive.

An enemy aircraft bombed a town in Kent during the day, only slight damage resulting.

Before daylight German aeroplanes dropped bombs in Dublin, destroying property and causing some twenty casualties. The Eireann chargé d'affaires in Berlin was instructed to protest against, and claim full reparation for these and previous outrages.

Just after dawn Australian forces supported by tanks penetrated a sector of the Bardia defences. By the evening the advance had progressed two miles along a nine-mile front. The whole operation was preceded and accompanied by an intensive land, air and naval bombardment. A British destroyer had steamed into Bardia harbour before daylight, sunk one Italian ship and captured another. The R.A.F. raided Tobruk and Gazala. One of our bombers was lost, but three Italian aircraft were shot down.

The French Admiralty announced that the submarine "Sfax" and the fleet oil tanker "Rhône," whilst proceeding in company from Casablanca to Dakar on 19th December sank after heavy

explosions with the loss of 74 men. The vessels were believed to have been torpedoed by an unidentified submarine.

At night the R.A.F. bombed Bremen for the third time, leaving the industrial area "a mass of flame."

4th January.—Enemy aircraft made a prolonged night attack upon Bristol. Considerable damage was done and casualties were suffered. Bombs were also dropped in the London area, causing damage and casualties. One of the enemy was shot down by anti-aircraft fire.

During the day one or two attacks were made by isolated enemy aircraft upon the East and South-East Coasts of England. Some damage and casualties were caused in a town in Kent. Two of the enemy were shot down; we lost one fighter.

Two magnetic sea-mines dropped at Enniskerry were identified by the Eireann authorities as of German origin.

Before nightfall the **Italians occupying the northern sector of the Bardia defences surrendered.** Prisoners amounted to more than 15,000 and the remaining centres of resistance were in process of reduction. The R.A.F. destroyed four Italian aircraft, and at night carried out destructive raids upon Bomba and Tripoli.

Operations in Albania were almost at a standstill owing to the bad weather. The R.A.F. bombed Elbasan.

At dusk the R.A.F. attacked Brest and scored three direct hits upon a German destroyer. Our aircraft were attacked by enemy fighters one of which was destroyed. We lost one bomber.

Off the South-West coast of Norway the R.A.F. bombed two German merchant vessels.

At night, when the weather rapidly grew worse, Brest was again attacked by the R.A.F. and targets in Hamburg were bombed, all without loss.

During the night enemy aircraft attacked a town in the West of England, starting fires and causing a number of casualties. Places in South Wales suffered to a less degree.

After the attack on the City of London, Sunday, 29th December, when so much destruction was wrought by the enemy's incendiary bombs, the wintry weather interrupted to some extent air operations over Britain and Germany. During 1940, aircraft of the R.A.F. Fighter Command destroyed 3,090 enemy aeroplanes in defending Britain and shipping in British waters. The anti-aircraft batteries in the British Isles accounted for 444 of the enemy. The R.A.F. lost 1,050 fighters, but over 400 of the pilots were saved.

President Roosevelt's broadcast talk on 29th December was received with approval throughout the U.S.A. and impressed the neutral nations. Hitler's New Year proclamation contained the familiar threats and sneers, and promised a German victory.

As expected, the capture of Bardia had presented no great difficulty. A feature of the preliminary operation had been the terrific naval bombardment in which British battleships and monitors took a notable part. Although repeatedly attacked from the air, the Fleet drove off the Italian bombers with practically no loss; the only casualties reported were in H.M. gunboat "Aphis," and these were caused by a "near miss."

Persistent rumours were current of the concentration of thousands of German troops in Rumania, threatening an attack upon Greece (Salonika) through Bulgaria. Remembering the difficulties of a winter campaign these widely spread reports seemed rather to be an attempt to restore the lowered prestige of the Axis Powers in the Balkans. Sections of the German Air Force were, however, announced by Rome to have arrived in Italy for participation in the "Mediterranean war." Certainly the quickest and easiest way for Germany to help Italy was to stiffen her air arm.

During the week ended 23rd-24th December, 15 British (total tonnage 32,849) and 3 neutral (10,451) merchant ships were sunk by enemy action, again a figure well below the average. The reduction was to be attributed mainly to the winter weather which made conditions difficult for the enemy's submarines and long-distance bombers and circumscribed his mine-laying activities; but the new type of anti-submarine craft, christened "corvette," which we had begun to employ, had more than fulfilled expectations.

H.M. submarine "Thunderbolt" (see 2nd January) was the former "Thetis," which foundered in Liverpool Bay during her trials before the War and was subsequently recovered.

If the report of the destruction of the French submarine and tanker, whilst *en route* from Casablanca to Dakar, was to be credited (see 3rd January), Germany evidently viewed with extreme disfavour the movement of any French war vessel. Changes in the Vichy Cabinet were announced, but the trend of Marshal Pétain's negotiations with Germany had not been revealed.

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5th January.—The only activity of enemy aircraft over Britain during the day consisted of the bombing of two places in East Anglia. Some damage was done and a few people were injured.

Before dusk the R.A.F. attacked the docks at Brest and an enemy aerodrome. One enemy fighter was shot down. All our aircraft returned safely.

The Admiralty announced the loss of H.M. trawler "Kenny-more" and of H.M. drifter "Harvest Gleaner."

All resistance at Bardia ceased at 1.30 p.m. The prisoners, including many generals, exceeded 25,000; 45 light tanks and five medium tanks were captured or destroyed. The R.A.F. concentrated their attacks upon Tobruk by day and night; eleven Italian aircraft were destroyed.

In Albania the Greeks gained local successes with the capture of 200 prisoners and war material.

At night Greek destroyers steamed up the Adriatic unmolested and bombarded Valona.

Enemy aircraft attacked London at night, but the raids were not on a heavy scale. Fires started were promptly dealt with, and casualties were few.

6th January.—Bombs were dropped by enemy aircraft during the day in the London area, at a place in Kent, and at some points in the Eastern counties.

A Blenheim aircraft of the Coastal Command attacked three enemy merchant vessels off the coast of Norway and badly damaged one of them. Other of our aircraft attacked enemy tankers off the Dutch coast and one tanker of about 5,000 tons was hit.

Whilst the clearance of the Bardia battlefield proceeded (the number of prisoners now amounting to over 30,000) British forces approached the Tobruk area where the R.A.F. continued their attacks.

The Greeks made appreciable progress in the coastal sector of Albania, in the Klisura region, and in the North. Italian aircraft bombed Koritza.

The R.A.F. bombed Valona effectively despite bad weather, and in air combat severely damaged two Italian fighters. One of our bombers was lost.

Massawa (Eritrea) was successfully bombed by the R.A.F. at night.

7th January.—Enemy aircraft dropped bombs at several places in England during the day, damage and casualties resulting in the London area and in the Midlands. One German aircraft was shot down.

In Libya R.A.F. action was again concentrated upon Tobruk in co-operation with the advance of the British land forces into that area. The Italian aerodrome of El Adem, containing 40 damaged aircraft, was found abandoned by our troops. Derna and Martuba were bombed by the R.A.F.

In Albania, despite rain and snow, the R.A.F. bombed Elbasan.

At night the R.A.F. again bombed the port of Massawa (Eritrea).

8th January.—Slight enemy air activity over England during the day caused damage and casualties in an East Anglian town and damage in the Midlands. Our fighters brought down one German aircraft off the South Coast.

**The Admiralty announced that H.M. submarine "Tuna" had had an encounter by night with a U-boat in enemy waters. The German fled and was hit by a shell in the conning-tower.**

**H.M. submarine "Regulus," overdue, was presumed lost.**

In Libya the R.A.F. continued to attack the Italian aerodromes, Gazala, Martuba, Tmimi and Benina, all being heavily bombed. Benghazi and Tobruk were also raided and enemy convoys North-West of Giarabub were attacked. The attacks upon Benghazi and Tobruk were repeated at night.

In Albania the Greeks reported further progress with the capture of prisoners and material. Greek aircraft co-operated successfully and also brought down three Italian-machines.

**The R.A.F. made a heavy raid upon Naples during the night.** Bombs fell either on or very near the stern of a battleship of the "Littorio" class and a number of motor vessels were set on fire. A dry dock, buildings and a railway line were also hit. Other of our aircraft attacked Palermo when explosions were caused on jetties and among shipping.

9th January.—The night offensive of the R.A.F. against Germany included attacks upon the docks at Wilhelmshaven and Emden, and the enemy aerodrome on the island of Borkum. None of our aircraft was lost.

During daylight enemy aircraft appeared over the East and South-East Coasts of England, but no bombs were dropped.

In Libya British mechanized forces were operating West of Tobruk. At night the R.A.F. bombed the aerodromes at Benina and Berka.



Italian monoplane fighters made two raids on Malta but did little damage. During the first raid our fighters shot down into the sea four of the enemy and a fifth fell to anti-aircraft fire.

In Albania the Greeks reported the success of local engagements which included a bayonet attack. More prisoners and material, including 20 mortars, had been captured.

In Kenya one of our mobile columns entered unopposed the village of Buna, which had been in Italian possession for many months, also Turbi and the Turbi hills.

Abyssinian partisans, supported by R.A.F. action, were announced to have forced the Italians to evacuate the post of Gubba. The South African Air Force bombed the aerodrome at Javello (Abyssinia) destroying two aircraft and damaging others.

**The commander of the Free French Naval Forces reported the loss of the submarine "Narval," sunk by enemy action.**

At night the R.A.F. attacked Messina, dropping several tons of bombs upon vessels in the harbour and on docks, wharves and oil stores. Many fires were started, but the extent of the damage done to a number of Italian cruisers, which threw out a smoke screen, could not be ascertained.

The R.A.F. made a night attack upon the synthetic oil plant at Gelsenkirchen, also bombing the inland ports of Duisburg-Ruhrort and Düsseldorf and a number of other objectives in the Rhine which included factories, blast-furnaces and railways. Other objectives were the oil-storage plant at Rotterdam and the docks at Flushing, Dunkirk, Calais and Brest; a railway bridge near Egersund (South-West Norway) was severely damaged. We lost two aircraft, but one of our bombers engaged and shot down an enemy fighter.

10th January.—During the night enemy aircraft dropped bombs in many districts of England and Wales, including Merseyside and North-West England, the Midlands and the London area. Some damage was caused, but the number of casualties was not large; two enemy bombers were shot down by A.A. fire.

A strong combined force of R.A.F. bombers and fighters carried out low-level attacks by daylight upon enemy-occupied aerodromes in Northern France, notably in the Forêt de Guines (near Calais) and Guines la Plage. A railway station was bombed and gun-posts and enemy troops seen near Wissant were machine-gunned

by our fighters. No opposition was encountered except upon the return journey when two enemy aircraft were shot down; four enemy patrol boats off the French coast were machine-gunned by one of our returning fighters.

In the Sicilian channel our naval forces encountered two Italian destroyers; one, of the "Spica" class, was sunk, the other escaped. Later H.M. destroyer "Gallant" was damaged by mine or torpedo. German and Italian air forces, working from Italian bases and including a number of dive-bombers, made repeated attacks upon our ships, H.M. aircraft carrier "Illustrious" and H.M. cruiser "Southampton" being hit and suffering casualties. Twelve enemy aircraft, at least, were shot down and a further number were damaged. The main object of our presence in these waters was to pass from West to East a convoy carrying important material assistance to Greece, and this was accomplished according to plan.

In Libya the R.A.F. patrolled the Tobruk-Derna area, and at night carried out heavy raids on Benina and Berka aerodromes and on the harbour at Benghazi.

The R.A.F. also bombed the Caproni workshops at Mai Adaga and buildings at Asmara (Eritrea); and troop concentrations in the Tessenei area.

The Greeks occupied the town of Klisura in Albania and captured fresh positions nearby. About 600 prisoners were taken, with guns and war material. The R.A.F. bombed Italian troops, tanks and convoys retreating along the Klisura-Berat road.

The Fleet Air Arm raided the shipping in Palermo harbour at night. One bomb fell close to a merchant ship of about 8,000 tons, other ships were damaged, and explosions were caused among the warehouses.

The night offensive of the R.A.F. against enemy-occupied territory consisted of attacks upon the dockyards at Brest when a large vessel received two direct hits and great fires were started, and upon the harbour at Le Havre. None of our aircraft was lost.

Enemy aircraft concentrated upon Portsmouth at night when considerable damage was done and casualties caused by high-explosive and incendiary bombs. One enemy aircraft was shot down by a night fighter and one by anti-aircraft fire; the Germans reported the loss of six of their machines.

11th January.—Daylight attacks were made by the R.A.F. on a number of targets near the Dutch and Belgian coasts. Barges on a canal at Middelharnis were damaged; two hits were obtained upon the Zeebrugge mole; and troops drilling at Domburg were machine-gunned from a low level.

G.H.Q. Cairo announced that the **Italian casualties at Bardia in killed and captured amounted to 2,041 officers and 42,827 other ranks.** In addition, 368 medium and field guns, 26 heavy A.A. guns, 68 light guns, 11 medium tanks, 117 light tanks and 708 transport vehicles had been captured or destroyed. Another Blackshirt general had been captured whilst trying to escape on foot towards Tobruk.

The R.A.F. reported that the enemy aerodromes at Derna, Martuba, El Tmimi and Gazala had been abandoned. Twenty burnt-out aircraft lay on the Gazala landing ground. The Bomba seaplane base also appeared to have been evacuated. At night our bombers attacked with great success the docks and a railway at Benghazi; also barracks and defences at Derna.

In Eritrea the R.A.F. made a further raid upon Mai Adaga when the petrol dumps and Caproni workshops were again bombed. The defences of Berbera (British Somaliland in Italian occupation) were also attacked.

At night the R.A.F. bombed the shipbuilding yards at Wilhelms-haven.

Other of our bombers attacked with good results the Royal Arsenal at Turin and other targets nearby, all the day and night operations of the R.A.F. costing us two aircraft; but the crew of one of them was known to be safe.

At night enemy aircraft attacked London with incendiary and high-explosive bombs. The fires caused were promptly dealt with, but considerable damage was done and many casualties occurred. Bombs also fell at places in South and South-East England. One enemy aircraft was shot down.

Bad flying weather affected both the R.A.F. offensive against Germany and the enemy air operations over Britain. It was noticeable that as the German air activity in daylight diminished we embarked upon systematic attacks over the German-occupied coasts by day.

The abject surrender of Bardia—where the British casualties amounted to only 600—lowered still further Italian prestige in the Near East. Bardia and its defences formed a strong position yet only the feeblest efforts were made to defend it; some Italian generals fled leaving their

commands to their fate. And in Bardia, according to a captured order of battle, were 44,000 men. Of particular value was the close co-operation of the R.A.F. and the Fleet with the land forces. It was obviously impossible for our forces to stand on the line of the Libyan frontier, and the forward movement had continued towards Tobruk when there seemed every likelihood of a repetition of the events at Bardia.

With patient tenacity the Greeks had continued their advance in Albania. The Italians had not yet found a defensive line which they were able to hold, and up to the 8th January, 14,000 prisoners had fallen to the Greeks.

Italy had called up her 1921 and 1922 classes which would provide her with an additional 500,000 men. Revolt in Abyssinia was growing. The first evidence of German help was the participation of German dive-bombers in the aerial attacks upon our warships off Sicily on the 10th January.

In his speech to Congress on the 6th January, President Roosevelt affirmed that the "defenders of freedom" would be supplied with the weapons they needed irrespective of the question of payment. Two days later the American armament programme for 1941-2 was announced; also the mobilization of the American Navy which would be divided into three fleets—American, Pacific and Asiatic. The "British Aid" Bill introduced into Congress on the 10th January contained a clause which implied that British warships might refit or carry out repairs at American naval bases.

German inspired allegations that it was the British intention to invade Eire from Ulster during the next few weeks, and threats that "similar German action to that carried out in Norway and Belgium might be expected" revealed the familiar enemy technique. In any case Britain still stood ready for, and expectant of, a German attempt at invasion.

A new Russo-German pact signed on the 10th January was reported to provide for the continuation and expansion of economic relations; also to regulate the repatriation of the German Balts.

Although the total of merchant tonnage sunk by enemy action during the week ended 29th-30th December amounted to only three British (18,208 tons) and four Allied ships (19,348 tons), and was thus well below the average for the third week in succession, it was far too early to assume that the menace of German mine, submarine, surface raider, and long-distance aircraft had been definitely overcome.

12th January.—Daylight attacks were made by R.A.F. fighters on troops in trenches on the French coast, as well as shipping and ground defences. Three of our aircraft were lost.

In Norwegian waters the R.A.F. secured direct hits with bombs on two enemy merchant vessels which were also machine-gunned.

**A night attack** was made with conspicuous success by R.A.F. bombers **upon the aerodrome at Catania (Sicily).**

In Libya the R.A.F. made successful night attacks upon the aerodromes of Berka and Benina ; and in Eritrea on the aerodromes at Asmara, Barentu and Agordat. The Caproni works at Mai Adaga were again bombed.

At night widespread operations of the R.A.F. included the bombing of oil refineries at Ostend, Regensburg (Ratisbon) and Porto Marghera (near Venice). In each case extensive fires were started and much destruction caused. One of our aircraft was lost. The docks at Brest, Le Havre and Lorient were also attacked with success, and among the aerodromes visited with satisfactory results were those at Vannes, Chartres, Evreux, where a number of hostile aircraft were burnt on the ground, and Morlaix.

13th January.—During the night enemy aircraft attacked London (the fires started were soon brought under control) and several places near the Thames estuary. Casualties were not heavy. A place in South-West England was also bombed.

Operations in Libya were hampered by severe sand-storms. At night the R.A.F. raided Benghazi.

In Albania the Greeks made progress in the central sector, and near the coast captured prisoners from Italian reinforcements. The R.A.F. bombed Italian concentrations at Berat.

Rome announced that General Soddu, commanding the Italian forces in Albania, had resigned for reasons of health, and that he was succeeded by General Ugo Cavallero who would continue to retain his appointment as Chief of the Italian Staff.

The R.A.F. attacked motor transport concentrations at Tessenei (Eritrea), and at night bombed Asmara.

At night in bad weather the R.A.F. carried out a successful attack upon the submarine base at Lorient. Targets in the Dunkirk area were bombed and fires were caused.

14th January.—Enemy aircraft attacked Plymouth by night causing fires and damage and a number of casualties. A little damage was done by bombs dropped at points in Wales.

In Albania the Greeks repulsed two counter-attacks with considerable loss to the enemy, four of his tanks being captured.



One Italian aircraft was shot down by machine-gun fire. The Italians bombed Preveza from the air, and two destroyers shelled the Greek positions near Chimara without effect.

A British raid by moonlight on Italian positions in the Gallabat sector of the Sudan-Abyssinia frontier was reported to have inflicted considerable loss at very slight cost.

Benghazi (Libya) was again heavily attacked by the R.A.F. at night, much damage being caused to the harbour. On their return journey our aircraft machine-gunned Benina aerodrome, destroying two enemy aircraft and damaging others.

Assab (Eritrea) was bombed with success by the R.A.F. at night.

15th January.—Before daylight (in bad weather) the R.A.F. attacked objectives in Norway, including enemy air bases at Mandal and Forus. Two direct hits were scored on a motor-ship in Stavanger roads and an important railway bridge was bombed.

Few aircraft were reported over Britain during the day. Although bombs were dropped in the West of Scotland, the Midlands, and in Kent, little damage was done and no casualties were reported.

In Albania the Greeks attacked successfully along their whole front in spite of snow, bitter cold and stubborn enemy resistance. Prisoners, guns and war material were captured.

A further raid on the enemy aerodrome at Catania (Sicily) was carried out by the R.A.F. at night, much destruction being caused to hangars and aircraft.

At night the R.A.F. made a heavy and sustained attack, with an "exceptionally large force," upon the Wilhelmshaven naval base. The docks at Emden, Bremerhaven, Rotterdam and Flushing were also bombed; other targets in North-West Germany and Holland included a number of aerodromes. The harbour at Brest was again attacked. In all these operations one of our aircraft was lost.

During the night enemy aircraft bombed several towns on the East Coast and places in the Midlands, also attacking London with incendiary and high-explosive bombs. There were a number of casualties in London and elsewhere, but the damage was not extensive. Two enemy bombers were shot down, our night patrols being active.

16th January.—Enemy aircraft, in daylight, dropped bombs at two points in East Kent, but no damage or casualties were reported.

A very heavy air raid was carried out on Malta, German dive-bombers attacking the harbour. Between them our fighters and the A.A. defence destroyed ten enemy aircraft (probably eleven) and damaged six others. Civilian property was damaged, but, otherwise, we sustained no loss.

A photographic reconnaissance by the R.A.F. showed that in the raid carried out upon the Catania (Sicily) air-base on the night of the 12th-13th January, between 30 and 40 enemy aircraft were either burned or severely damaged. The havoc wrought among the hangars and buildings was very great.

The Admiralty announced that H.M. cruiser "Southampton" had been so severely damaged by the air attack on the 10th January (q.v.) that it had been found necessary to sink her. The great majority of her complement were safe.

H.M. submarine "Pandora," it was revealed in another Admiralty communiqué, had sunk two enemy supply ships of about 5,000 tons in the Central Mediterranean.

In Libya the R.A.F. bombed the barracks at Derna, and at night delivered a heavy and very successful attack upon Tobruk, Derna being visited again.

Local successes, chiefly in the Klisura region, were gained by the Greeks in spite of the bad weather in Albania.

The R.A.F. bombed the aerodrome at Maritza (island of Rhodes) at night.

Italian aircraft attacked Summit (Sudan) at night and also Tel Aviv (Palestine). In neither case was the damage severe.

Although beset by electrical storms and having to contend with severe icing conditions, the R.A.F. again carried out a successful night raid on Wilhelmshaven where the railway station and the oil storage depôts suffered severely. Other of our bombers attacked the docks at Emden, Boulogne and Calais, a railway junction at Ostend, and an aerodrome in occupied France. In all these operations five of our aircraft were lost.

17th January.—Night raids by enemy aircraft were made on South-East South and South-West England, being chiefly concentrated upon the Bristol area. Damage was done to commercial buildings, but the fires were soon brought under control and casualties were not heavy. One enemy bomber was shot down by our fighters.

In the afternoon the R.A.F. bombed and machine-gunned enemy shipping off the Dutch coast. Direct hits were observed on four ships, two of which were badly damaged if not sunk.

Tobruk, in Libya, was again raided by the R.A.F.

In Albania the Greeks had local successes in the Tepelini and Klisura regions. Italian prisoners reported that two big liners, "Lombardia" (20,006 tons) and "Liguria" (15,354 tons) had been torpedoed and sunk in the Adriatic whilst transporting troops.

In East Africa the R.A.F. bombed Assab and an enemy camp near Umm Hagar (Eritrea), also Hargeisa (British Somaliland). Asmara (Eritrea) was raided at night.

Night bombing operations against Germany were greatly restricted by the bad weather, but attacks were made on the docks at Brest and Cherbourg and on some aerodromes in occupied France.

18th January.—Enemy aircraft attacked Swansea during the night, causing fires, other damage and some casualties. One enemy bomber was shot down by fire from the ground. A place in Devon and other points elsewhere were bombed with little effect.

During daylight bombs were dropped in the London area; other enemy aircraft attacked points on the East Coast, causing some casualties and damage.

**Malta was again attacked by large forces of enemy aircraft, including German dive-bombers.** Seven were shot down by our fighters who badly damaged a number of others; three were destroyed by fire from the ground. We lost two fighters but only one pilot; the damage caused by the raids was not of a serious nature.

In Albania the Greeks carried out a successful local operation in the central (Moskopole) sector, capturing 1,000 prisoners.

The Greek Ministry of Marine announced that the submarine "Proteus" on the morning of the 29th December had destroyed the Italian transport "Sardinia" (11,500 tons) which formed part of a strongly escorted convoy for Albania.

In the Sudan our troops reoccupied Kassala after its evacuation by the Italians, who fell back across the frontier into Eritrea under pressure from our mobile detachments.

In Eritrea the R.A.F. attacked the Caproni workshops at Mai Adaga and the motor-transport park at Assab. Our aircraft also bombed motor-transport near Berbera (British Somaliland) and gun emplacements at Zeila. At night, attacks were made upon motor transport and gun positions South-East of Tesseni; Massawa was twice raided; and Assab was bombed. Hargeisa (British Somaliland) was also attacked.

In the Sudan British forces reoccupied Kassala from which the Italians had withdrawn.

There were no air raids on Britain after darkness fell, but before midnight German guns on the French coast began to shell the Dover area. Our guns replied.

Apart from their air raids by night, with the extensive use of incendiary bombs, upon London, Plymouth, the Bristol area (Avonmouth) and Swansea, the Germans achieved little during the week. These attacks, which were attended with comparatively small success, could, perhaps, be regarded as part of the air offensive which would precede the invasion of Britain. Our own air offensive, expanding as our air arm grew in size and strength, was circumscribed by unfavourable weather conditions.

German air forces, based upon Sicily, continued to be seen in action in support of Italy, but the raids upon Malta proved expensive and did little damage. The arrival of the German dive-bombers meant a new menace to the passage of British shipping through the Sicilian channel, but there was no reason to anticipate that they would be able to close it. Both H.M. ships "Illustrious" and "Gallant" reached port safely after the action of the 10th January (q.v.). H.M. cruiser "Southampton" was the fourth cruiser—the third by enemy action—lost since the beginning of the War.

Following a Bulgarian declaration of independence Germany denied any evil intention of a forward march in the Balkans, but there remained the possibility that she would move against Greece in the spring as soon as weather conditions allowed. German troops, besides German air forces, were known to be in Italy.

Italy's plight stood yet more clearly revealed. Her losses in Albania were computed to have reached 70,000, besides an enormous quantity of war material. In Egypt-Libya three corps, comprising eight divisions and one armoured group, had been destroyed; about 800 guns, 200 tanks, 1,300 machine guns and ammunition and stores of all kinds were in British hands. Our casualties in this theatre since the 7th December amounted to less than 1,500. The revolt in Abyssinia was undoubtedly making headway and in Khartoum the former Emperor, Haile Selassie, announced that he would soon be at the head of his people in their struggle for freedom. As a result of persistent and successful operations, carried out by forces numerically inferior to the Italians, we had been able to reoccupy Kassala and were in a position to advance into Eritrea.

Germany showed signs of forcing the Vichy Government to take back M. Laval, otherwise there seemed to be little change in the situation in France.

During the week ending 5th/6th January only four British ships (total tonnage, 14,687) and no allied or neutral vessels were sunk by enemy action ; but this satisfactory state of affairs might be attributable to the severity of the weather. Only with the spring would the increased strength of our protective measures be tested to the full.

19th January.—In the morning a single enemy aircraft dropped bombs on an East Coast town causing little damage but a few casualties. In the afternoon our fighters intercepted and shot down an enemy bomber over the English Channel.

**Dive-bombing attacks by German aircraft** were again made on Malta. Although considerable damage was done to civilian property, **nineteen of the enemy were shot down** by our fighters and ground defences ; several others were damaged. We lost three fighters, but only one pilot.

The R.A.F. carried out heavy night attacks upon Tobruk (Libya). Much damage was done.

The railway station at Brindisi (South Italy) was bombed by the R.A.F. at night.

In Albania the R.A.F. made a successful raid on Berat, where troop concentrations, motor transport and buildings were hit. At night **our aircraft heavily bombed Valona.**

Advancing from Kassala into Eritrea our forces occupied fortified localities about Sabderat and Tessenei, from which the Italians had withdrawn. Contact was maintained with the retreating enemy.

South African troops were reported to have had a successful minor engagement on the Kenya frontier North of Dukana ; farther East, our patrols were active in the El Wak region (Italian Somaliland frontier).

20th January.—At night, enemy aircraft bombed a number of places in South and South-East England and points in the London area. Some damage was caused but casualties were few. Five German bombers were destroyed, four of them by fire of our ground defences.

Bombs dropped by single enemy aircraft in Norfolk, Kent and the Home Counties during the day did no harm.

In preparation for the general attack on Tobruk (Libya), the R.A.F. carried out a particularly heavy bombing raid at night ; the barracks and other military objectives at Derna were also bombed with great effect.



The Greeks reported more successful local encounters in Albania ; also the sinking of an enemy submarine. **The R.A.F. again bombed Valona** with good effect.

Italian aircraft carried out two raids on the Piræus, and an enemy bomber was shot down. One of our aircraft was damaged on landing. Enemy aeroplanes also raided Eleusis, Corfu and Herakleion (Crete).

In East Africa the R.A.F. bombed Assab (Eritrea), and the South African Air Force Neghelli (Abyssinia), considerable destruction being caused at both places.

Our troops continued their pursuit of the Italians withdrawing from the Kassala region into Eritrea. Pressure was also maintained upon the enemy in the Metemma region of Abyssinia.

**Hitler and Mussolini met** in conference at a place of which the name was not disclosed. It was understood that each had his chief political and military advisers in attendance.

At night, enemy aircraft, flying at a great height, indulged in indiscriminate bombing of Malta, but did practically no harm.

**The R.A.F. carried out a night raid upon the aerodrome at Catania (Sicily)**, where seven aircraft on the ground were seen to burst into flames. Buildings were also set ablaze.

In East Africa the R.A.F. made night attacks upon Massawa (Eritrea) and the railway station at Aisha on the Jibuti-Addis Ababa railway. Objectives near Adad and at Burye (Abyssinia) were also attacked.

21st January.—Enemy aircraft dropped a few bombs on the outskirts of London and at points in the Home and Eastern counties during the day. Little damage and few casualties were reported.

In Libya **the attack upon Tobruk started at dawn**. By the afternoon our troops had penetrated the outer and inner defences to a depth of five miles on a broad front and had taken many prisoners including an Italian General ; by dusk we had advanced eight miles and our forward troops were firmly established in positions overlooking the town and about three miles from it. The operations were strongly supported by the Fleet and by the R.A.F., whose attacks on the town and defences were continuous and cost us one bomber. Maraua aerodrome was bombed and eight enemy aircraft were observed burning on the landing ground at Derna. Our fighters could obtain no contact with the enemy in the air.

The Greek advance in the central sector of the Albanian front resulted in a distinct success, with captures of prisoners and material. The R.A.F. bombed Elbasan.

Our forces operating from the Sudan continued the pursuit of the Italians who had retreated over forty miles into Eritrea, opposite Kassala. Rhodesian aircraft machine-gunned enemy transport on the road between Keru and Bishia.

East of Metemma (Abyssinia) the enemy continued to give ground under our pressure. The South African Air Force raided the aerodrome at Javello, where direct hits on enemy bombers were obtained.

On the Kenya frontier the enemy detachments so long established in Kenya territory were everywhere being driven back.

22nd January.—Shortly before dawn, enemy aircraft dropped bombs on the Kent coast. Later in the morning, bombs fell at a place in the East Riding of Yorkshire. Little damage was done and no casualties were reported. Our fighters destroyed two German bombers.

During daylight reconnaissance of the coastline (Channel, etc.) of the occupied territories, the R.A.F. made several attacks upon enemy shipping.

Two small "fighting sweeps" were made by the R.A.F. in the afternoon over France between the Straits of Dover and the River Somme. Low level attacks were delivered on enemy aircraft at several aerodromes and on troops and ground defences. Our fighters were not engaged by the enemy, and all returned safely.

The Admiralty announced the loss of H.M. destroyer "**Hyperion**," which, after sustaining damage by mine or torpedo, had subsequently to be sunk by our forces.

A British destroyer was reported to have captured two 400-ton Italian motor-ships off the Libyan coast.

**The capture of Tobruk was completed before nightfall.** The prisoners already enumerated amounted to 14,000, including one Corps Commander, one Divisional Commander, two other Generals, and an Admiral. About 200 guns and much other booty were captured. Some 2,000 Italian wounded were evacuated at once; our total casualties were under 500. The R.A.F. covered the advance westward of our forward troops and shot down an

enemy fighter 26 miles beyond Tobruk. Raids were made on the barracks at Appolonia (West of Derna). One of our aircraft was lost.

In Albania the Greeks gained new positions in the Tepelini area, also in the northern sector. The Greek air force destroyed a large Italian convoy in the central sector, where enemy counter-attacks were repulsed. The R.A.F. bombed Berat, and also motor transport on the Klisura-Berat road.

Italian aircraft raided Salonika, Volos, Preveza, and an island in the Aegean Sea.

In Eritrea our troops gained contact with the Italians who had taken up defensive positions covering Biscia-Barentu. The R.A.F. bombed Assab.

Pressure was maintained on the enemy in Abyssinia, East of Metemma. The R.A.F. made fresh raids upon Adad (80 miles South-West of Jibuti).

The R.A.F. carried out a successful night attack upon the aerodrome at Maritza (island of Rhodes).

**Aerodromes in Sicily were heavily bombed by the R.A.F. at night.** Comiso, Augusta, Syracuse and Catania were all attacked, the raid upon Catania being particularly destructive.

In spite of bad weather the R.A.F. delivered night attacks on the Düsseldorf area and other parts of the Ruhr. Two aerodromes in enemy-occupied territory were also bombed.

Few enemy aircraft were over Britain during the night. Bombs dropped in the Eastern Counties did little damage and caused no casualties.

23rd January.—During the day enemy aircraft dropped bombs at three places on the coast of East Anglia. A little damage was done, and a few persons were injured.

In Libya our troops continued their advance westward from Tobruk. The R.A.F. bombed Appolonia, Derna and Maraua (50 miles South-West of Appolonia).

The Greeks made further progress during local operations in Albania where 200 Italians were captured.

**The retreat of the Italians in Eritrea continued,** Keru and Aicota being evacuated. At Keru the South African Air Force engaged Italian aircraft, shooting down one and destroying another on the ground.

Reports were received of successful activities of Abyssinian bands South and East of Lake Tana. (It was revealed that **Haile Selassie** had entered Abyssinia on the 15th January.) South African aircraft bombed Sciasciamanna (120 miles South of Addis Ababa) where four Italian aircraft were destroyed and others damaged. Neghelli (250 miles South of Addis Ababa) was also attacked with success by the South African Air Force.

The aerodrome at Maritza (island of Rhodes) was raided by the R.A.F. at night.

24th January.—In Libya, by the evening British advanced troops were in contact with the enemy about three miles East of Derna. A column of Italian medium tanks was dispersed, two being captured and four destroyed. At Tobruk the prisoners were now estimated at about 20,000. The R.A.F. attacked dispersed enemy aircraft at Magrum (45 miles South of Benghazi) and continued to patrol the Marturba-Mekile area.

The Admiralty announced that **H.M. submarine "Parthian"** had sunk a heavily laden Italian supply ship (about 7,000 tons) off the South coast of Italy.

The Greek forces carried out successful local operations in Albania and reported an extensive Italian withdrawal.

In Eritrea operations against the Italians continued East of Keru-Aicota. Over 600 prisoners, including a brigade commander, had been captured; also two guns and a quantity of motor transport. The R.A.F. carried out heavy raids upon the Biscia-Agordat railway, motor transport, enemy posts and aircraft on the ground also being attacked.

In Abyssinia our pressure upon the enemy East of Metemma increased, whilst Abyssinian bands were active in the interior.

Many of our patrols from Kenya were reported to be penetrating far beyond the Italian frontiers.

It was officially announced that **Lord Halifax**, our new Ambassador, had reached the United States, having crossed the Atlantic in H.M. battleship "**King George V.**"

At night a British aircraft made a forced landing near Sligo (Eire).

The R.A.F. made a night attack on the German submarine base at Lorient.

25th January.—An enemy aircraft which attacked H.M. trawlers "**Strathannock**" and "**Galvani**" was driven off in flames.

During the afternoon enemy aircraft dropped bombs at two points in East Anglia. Some damage and a number of casualties ensued.

In Libya the British advanced troops near Derna were reinforced. The R.A.F. bombed the landing ground at Maraua and the aerodrome at Barce (South-West of Appolonia); Giarabub (150 miles South of Tobruk) was raided and one Italian bomber destroyed on the ground.

Restricted operations of the Greeks on the Albanian front resulted in the capture of 100 prisoners. Six Italian aircraft were brought down, three during an enemy raid on Salonika and three on the battle front. The R.A.F. made a successful attack on camps and depots at Boulsar (near Elbasan).

In Eritrea, Biscia was occupied and the British advance continued eastward towards Agordat. The R.A.F. bombed with great effect motor transport concentrations on the road near Tellena.

British patrols from the Kenya frontier began to operate in Italian Somaliland.

At night enemy aircraft dropped bombs in Cornwall. Little damage was done and there were very few casualties.

The slackening of German air raids on Britain was perhaps the result of weather conditions which were unfavourable for night flying, and made landing difficult at many of the enemy-occupied aerodromes near the coast. The German Air Command might have seized the opportunity to withdraw their bomber squadrons for a much needed rest and refit; or some change of policy might be indicated. Our own bombing offensives against Germany and German-occupied territories were also circumscribed by the continuous bad weather.

As was expected, Tobruk offered little resistance when the British attack was launched: although its defensive works were more elaborate than those of Bardia, the combined action of our land, sea and air forces again proved irresistible. The total of prisoners promised to fall little short of 30,000, and the amount of captured war material and supplies was very large. The harbour, when cleared of wrecked and sunken shipping, would be a valuable acquisition as a base for supply by sea, and could be used by our light naval forces.

The development of our general offensive against the Italian possessions in Africa was now evident. Almost before Tobruk had fallen our advanced troops were pressing westwards covered by the vigorous action of the R.A.F. Obviously General Wavell intended to push his advantage to the utmost, with prospects of wresting from the enemy the



whole of Cyrenaica. From Kassala our advance had driven deep into Eritrea, where difficult country and lengthening communications seemed likely to furnish bigger problems than the quality of the Italian defence. Haile Selassie's return to Abyssinia seemed to indicate that his followers were ready for revolt, and there was already news of the successful operations of native bands supported by our Air Force. From Kenya, too, our detachments had not only penetrated into Abyssinia, but had also crossed the Italian Somaliland frontier. Thus beset, Italian East Africa had no certain source of reinforcement or supply.

The Hitler-Mussolini conference on 20th January must have had momentous questions to decide. Probably all the Axis forces would now come under the supreme direction of Germany, who could hardly risk an Italian collapse. It was reported that German troops were entering Italy in considerable numbers; how they would be employed remained to be seen. The change of command in Albania (see 13th January) had not brought any success to the Italians; but Germany was not yet at war with Greece. From Belgrade at the end of the week came persistent rumours of disturbances in Northern Italy, ruthlessly suppressed.

In Rumania the "Iron Guard" extremists appeared to have revolted in vain against General Antonescu, although the situation was critical for several days. As the creature of the *Reich*, General Antonescu could, of course, have counted upon the support of the very considerable German forces in Rumania had he found it necessary to call upon them.

Details of the work carried out by the R.A.F. Coastal Command showed how valuable a part its aircraft played in the anti-submarine campaign: from the beginning of the War up to the end of 1940 Coastal Command aircraft had attacked about 160 times. Furthermore (up to mid-January) air escorts had been provided for 4,700 convoys, and in recent months the Command had sunk about 50,000 tons of enemy shipping by aerial-torpedo attack.

H.M. destroyer "Hyperion" (see 22nd January) was lost during a sweep of our light forces into the Adriatic. For nearly two hours she lay crippled on the sea very near the Italians, but the call for assistance was deliberately withheld, in order that no information as to the position of our forces might reach the enemy.

During the week ending 12th-13th January, nine British ships (30,226 tons) were lost by enemy action. No allied or neutral ships were lost. Since September, 1940, the average weekly loss had shown a steady decline month by month.

26th January.—H.M. trawler "Galvani" was attacked in the early morning by a German bomber, which she drove off in so badly damaged a condition that it crashed on the Norfolk coast.

In the afternoon, enemy aircraft attacked our shipping off the East Coast. H.M.S. "Wallace" and H.M. drifters "Fisher Boy" and "Reids" shot down at least two aircraft. The defensive armaments of merchant ships accounted for another. One vessel received some damage from a "near miss," but reached port safely.

In Libya, operations continued round Derna. The prisoners taken at Tobruk were now reported to number over 25,000. Twenty-two medium and twenty-eight light tanks had been captured.

Covering the movements of the Army, the R.A.F. bombed the aerodrome at Barce and the landing grounds at Derna and Appolonia. Our fighters shot down three Italian aircraft near Mechili (South of Derna), and two which were attacking our troops near Derna; another was destroyed on the ground. We lost one aircraft.

In Albania, the Greeks continued their successful local operations. It transpired that Italian counter-attacks, persisted in for two days, had ended in utter failure and a further enemy withdrawal.

Our forces in Eritrea closed in on the enemy positions about Agordat and Barentu. The Italians who had evacuated Umm Hagar were being closely pursued, and the total of prisoners was over 1,100. In support of these operations Rhodesian aircraft bombed a bridge near Telleni and attacked motor transport at Barentu and near Umm Hagar. A landing ground at Barentu was also bombed.

Further progress was made by our forces in the Metemma area of Abyssinia and Abyssinian bands continued to be active in the interior. Along the whole frontier of Italian Somaliland our patrols from Kenya had successful encounters with the enemy.

27th January.—In the early hours of the morning the R.A.F. made a successful attack upon industrial targets in Hanover.

During the day enemy aircraft dropped bombs on a North-East Coast town and on the East Coast. Some damage and casualties were reported.

In Libya, the concentration of our forces in the Derna area proceeded. The landing ground at Appolonia was again bombed by the R.A.F.

The Greek forces in Albania again repulsed Italian counter-attacks, and then resumed their advance in the central sector, capturing prisoners and material. The enemy losses were said to be severe. Elbasan was bombed successfully by the R.A.F.

The British forces in Eritrea made progress in the Barentu-Agordat area whilst pressing the Italians in retreat from Umm Hagar. Our aircraft operated with success against the enemy bases and communications, bombing Keren, Adarte, Assab and Gura. No opposition was encountered in the air.

At night the R.A.F. carried out a heavy and successful raid upon Capodichino (Naples) aerodrome. The central railway station and marshalling-yard at Naples were also attacked with great effect. In Sicily the air-bases at Catania and Comiso were bombed, fires and explosions being caused.

28th January.—In the morning enemy aircraft dropped bombs at a point in the Eastern counties, causing a little damage. Later, a few casualties were caused by bombs dropped indiscriminately in South-East England.

The Admiralty announced that H.M. submarine "Triton," long overdue, must be considered lost.

British forces advancing in the Derna area were covered by R.A.F. fighter patrols. Our aircraft attacked the retreating enemy between Derna and Barce. On the Martuba landing ground eleven unserviceable Italian aircraft were found, with three damaged fighters abandoned near by.

It was officially announced that a detachment of the Free French Forces operating from Equatorial Africa had raided Murzuk in South-West Libya about the middle of January. The aerodrome had been wrecked and aeroplanes destroyed on the ground.

An enemy air raid on Malta caused thirteen casualties to R.A.F. personnel and damaged some Government property.

In Albania the Greeks captured more prisoners and material. An Italian tank attack was repulsed, four tanks being destroyed. The R.A.F. broke up a formation of German bombers, shooting down one and damaging others.

During the night the Greek submarine "Papanikolis" sank a large enemy transport escorted by warships off Brindisi.

General Metaxas, the Greek Premier, died at his home near Athens.

In Eritrea operations continued in the Agordat-Barentu area with the assistance of the R.A.F., who also bombed a railway bridge and junction west of Keren. Prisoners were taken during the pursuit of the enemy withdrawing from Umm Hagar.

At night, the German batteries on the French coast carried out two brief bombardments of the Dover area. No damage was done.

29th January.—Bombs were dropped during the day by enemy aircraft at two points on the outskirts of London. Little damage resulted and very few casualties.

In Albania the Greeks repulsed Italian counter-attacks, in the central and northern sectors, inflicting heavy losses. Two Italian aircraft were brought down.

The King signed a proclamation extending the application of the National Service (Armed Forces) Act to the 1921 and 1922 classes; also to the 1903, 1902 and 1901 classes and the men of the 1900 class "unless and until they reach the age of 41."

During the night the R.A.F. bombed Wilhelmshaven and other targets in North-West Germany.

30th January.—Enemy aircraft, in a night raid, attacked London with high-explosive and incendiary bombs. The resulting fires were quickly extinguished and damage and casualties were slight.

The German guns on the French coast shelled the Dover area at intervals during the night 29th-30th. No casualties or damage were reported.

Daylight raids by enemy aircraft caused some damage and a number of casualties in the London area, and in parts of South-East England and East Anglia. German fighters attacked the Dover balloon barrage in the afternoon.

The Admiralty announced that H.M. trawler "Pelton" had been sunk.

The London headquarters of the Royal Netherlands Navy reported the loss in action of a Dutch submarine.

In Libya, British forces occupied Derna, advancing also towards Benghazi *via* Mechili. The R.A.F. made repeated bombing attacks upon the aerodrome at Barce. One Italian aircraft was shot down by our fighters.

In Albania, Greek operations developed successfully and more prisoners were taken. Italian concentrations were smashed by

artillery fire. North of Klisura the situation of the enemy was reported to be precarious.

Italian aircraft bombed the Suez Canal zone, but caused no damage or casualties.

The R.A.F. bombed a bridge on the Mega-Negelli road (Abyssinia) and attacked Italian positions at Moyale and in the Moyale region (Kenya-Abyssinia border).

Our patrols penetrating forty miles into Italian Somaliland from Kenya had successful encounters with native levies.

31st January.—During daylight enemy aircraft dropped bombs in the London area and at other points in southern England. Damage and casualties were small; two enemy bombers were shot down.

**Two British trawlers**, "Charmouth" and "Ratray," were reported to have **brought down an enemy aircraft** which attacked them **whilst they were fishing**. Neither trawler sustained any damage.

The R.A.F. bombed the aerodrome and a motor-transport concentration at Barce (Libya). At night a heavy raid was carried out upon the port of Tripoli, where three large merchant ships were damaged, one seaplane destroyed and others damaged, and much destruction caused to buildings and jetties.

A merchant ship evacuating Italian prisoners of war from the Libyan coast was attacked by two enemy aircraft, believed to be German. The ship was damaged and many casualties were caused among the Italians.

In Albania the Greeks continued to be successful in local operations, taking more prisoners. An Italian tank attack was smashed at the start. The R.A.F. bombed Dukaj (seven miles North-West of Telepini) and machine-gunned Italian troops nearby.

In Eritrea our fighters machine-gunned four Italian aircraft on the ground at Terramni (25 miles South-East of Asmara) and destroyed three of them.

1st February.—During the day, bombs were dropped by enemy aircraft in Norfolk and Suffolk. Some damage and a few casualties were caused.

Our fighters attacked enemy aircraft which flew over Malta and destroyed two of them.

In Albania the Greeks took 270 prisoners in the course of successful local actions. Valona was heavily bombed by the R.A.F.



The British advance in Eritrea reached **Agordat**, which was **captured** in the morning. Hundreds of prisoners, guns and mechanical transport were taken; six Italian medium tanks, five light tanks and fifteen guns were destroyed. In their final attack British and Indian troops inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy. The pursuit towards Keren began without delay. Operations in the Barentu area continued and Biacundi was occupied, more prisoners being taken from the Italian detachments retreating from Umm Hagar. The R.A.F. bombed Barentu severely, and also the road and motor-transport west of Asmara. One Italian aircraft was shot down at Agordat. The South African Air Force bombed the aerodromes at Zula and El Ghena, and also attacked Assab.

Across the border, in Abyssinia, the Italians withdrawing from the Walkait region had been obliged to abandon their motor-transport under pressure from Abyssinian bands and to take to mountain tracks.

Farther South, the Italians in full retreat into the interior of Abyssinia by the Metemma-Gondar road, were closely pressed by our advanced troops. The South African Air Force bombed Italian motor-transport at Mega and Javello.

The enemy advanced detachments in Italian Somaliland continued to fall back under our pressure.

At night, the R.A.F. attacked the docks at Brest. In the course of our day and night operations in unfavourable weather we lost two aircraft.

General expectation of a German invasion of Britain within the next two months was coupled with fantastic estimates supplied from neutral sources of the number of aircraft at the disposal of the enemy. His actual air strength was hard to calculate; still more difficult was it to determine what proportion he could produce to support an attempt at invasion. Meanwhile, the unfavourable weather had limited the R.A.F. offensive against Germany and German-occupied territories, as well as the enemy air attacks upon Britain.

The British forces in Libya had continued their advance westward to Derna (occupied without fighting) and towards Benghazi. The well-watered and fertile part of Cyrenaica had now been reached. The R.A.F. still held undisputed command of the air; the Mediterranean Fleet continued to serve the Army unimpeded by hostile action. It was significant that an Indian division had been diverted from Libya to take part in the invasion of Eritrea where the capture of Agordat,

after a very successful engagement, brought our advance to within seventy miles of the capital (Asmara) and a hundred miles of the Red Sea. In Abyssinia and Italian Somaliland the enemy was retreating from the frontier regions.

In Albania persistent Italian counter-attacks had resulted in heavy losses, failure, and general depression instead of gaining time for reinforcement and reorganization. It was difficult to say how much reliance could be placed upon the persistent reports of revolt in northern Italy quelled with German assistance; but drastic changes in the Fascist Cabinet—six Ministers including Count Ciano, Foreign Minister and Mussolini's son-in-law, left their political offices to serve at the front—were a sure indication that all was not well with the junior partner of the Axis.

German endeavours to help Italy seemed about to take on a more definite character. With or without the connivance of the Vichy Government, Germany was reported to be trying to secure the French fleet and the French Mediterranean bases. There was also talk of an attempt to seize Malta.

Our shipping losses for the week ending 19th-20th January were higher than those of the two previous weeks. Five British vessels (total tonnage 34,772) and six allied (23,440 tons) were sunk by enemy action.

2nd February.—Shortly before dawn R.A.F. bombers attacked the docks at Boulogne and Ostend. After daylight formations of our fighters carried out offensive sweeps over the Straits of Dover and German-occupied territory. Three enemy fighters were destroyed. In one of these sweeps a small force of bombers took part and attacked the docks at Boulogne. Other attacks were made by single aircraft on the aerodromes at Ostend and Berck; one enemy fighter attacked and was shot down. We lost one fighter in the course of these operations.

During the day enemy aircraft bombed places in East Anglia and on the coast of Kent. Some damage and casualties were caused.

The Fleet Air Arm carried out a successful attack upon one of the main sources of power supply in Sardinia. One of our aircraft was lost.

In Libya the R.A.F., covering the British operations from Derna towards Benghazi, machine-gunned Italian motor transport and troops at Slonta (25 miles S.W. of Appolonia), Maraua and

the Maraua—Guppa roads. At Appolonia enemy aircraft were destroyed on the ground, and transport and troops attacked. One enemy aircraft was shot down. At night our bombers carried out a heavy and successful raid upon Castel Benito and district: aircraft and buildings were destroyed and motor transport machine-gunned.

In Eritrea the enemy evacuated Barentu which was occupied by our troops who also pressed the pursuit of the Italians withdrawing towards Keren.

In Abyssinia the enemy retreating towards Gondar abandoned quantities of material and stores. From Kenya South African troops occupied the Italian posts of El Gumu and Gorai, ten miles inside the frontier, inflicting considerable loss upon the enemy.

South African aircraft destroyed an Italian bomber at Af Madu (Italian Somaliland).

## NAVY NOTES

### GREAT BRITAIN

#### H.M. THE KING

The King visited Southampton on 5th December following a heavy air raid on the port. He also went on to Portsmouth, where he saw some of the men who brought over the recently acquired American destroyers. His Majesty lunched with the Commander-in-Chief, Admiral Sir William James, and made a long tour of the dockyard.

On 18th December, the King visited Liverpool Docks, and went on board four merchant ships, two of which were being unloaded. The crews of many ships, including Norwegian, Belgian and Dutch, lined the dockside, and the King talked with many of the men who had been in ships attacked by enemy submarines or aircraft.

#### H.M. AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED STATES

On 24th January, it was officially announced that Lord Halifax, the newly appointed Ambassador to the United States, had arrived at Chesapeake Bay in the battleship "King George V"—the first public announcement that she is in commission. The "King George V" is the first of the five ships of the new 35,000 ton class, the other four being the "Prince of Wales," "Duke of York," "Anson," and "Howe"; the two latter were originally the "Jellicoe" and "Beatty." Their main armament consists of ten 14 in. guns, mounted in two quadruple and one pair turrets. The designed full speed is at least 30 knots.

### BOARD OF ADMIRALTY

The King has approved the appointment of Vice-Admiral John H. D. Cunningham, C.B., M.V.O., to be a Lord Commissioner of the Admiralty and Chief of Supplies and Transport, in succession to Vice-Admiral Geoffrey S. Arbuthnot, C.B., D.S.O., to date 1st April, 1941.

PERMANENT SECRETARY.—The First Lord of the Admiralty, with the approval of the Prime Minister, has appointed Mr. H. V. Markham to be Permanent Secretary of the Admiralty in succession to Sir Archibald Carter, who has been seconded for special war duties.

### FLAG APPOINTMENTS

PLYMOUTH COMMAND.—On 25th November, it was announced that the King had approved the appointment of Admiral of the Fleet Sir Charles M. Forbes, G.C.B., D.S.O., to be Commander-in-Chief, Plymouth, in succession to Admiral Sir Martin E. Dunbar-Nasmith, V.C., K.C.B., to date 1st May, 1941.

NORE COMMAND.—On 20th January, it was announced that the King had approved the appointment of Vice-Admiral Sir George H. D'Oyly Lyon, K.C.B., to be Commander-in-Chief, The Nore, in succession to Admiral the Hon. Sir Reginald A. R. Plunkett-Erne-Drax, K.C.B., D.S.O., to date 2nd April, 1941.

**EAST INDIES COMMAND.**—On 27th December, it was announced that the King had approved the appointment of Vice-Admiral Geoffrey S. Arbuthnot, C.B., D.S.O., to be Commander-in-Chief, East Indies, in succession to Vice-Admiral Ralph Leatham, C.B., to date about May, 1941.

**AFRICA STATION.**—On 12th December, it was announced that Vice-Admiral Robert H. T. Raikes, C.B., C.V.O., D.S.O., had recently relieved Vice-Admiral Sir G. H. D'Oyly Lyon, K.C.B., who was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Africa Station in January, 1938.

**GIBRALTAR.**—On 12th December, it was announced that Vice-Admiral Sir Frederick Edward-Collins, K.C.V.O., C.B., had been appointed to relieve Admiral Sir Dudley North, K.C.V.O., C.B., C.S.I., C.M.G., at Gibraltar.

**SEA COMMANDS.**—The following list of recent appointments to commands was also published on 12th December:—

Second-in-Command, Home Fleet, Vice-Admiral W. J. Whitworth, C.B., D.S.O.

Second-in-Command, Mediterranean Fleet, Acting Vice-Admiral H. D. Pridham-Wippell, C.B., C.V.O.

Command of Cruiser Squadrons, Vice-Admiral L. E. Holland, C.B.; Rear-Admiral E. L. S. King, C.B., M.V.O.; Rear-Admiral A. T. B. Curteis, C.B.; Rear-Admiral W. F. Wake-Walker, C.B., O.B.E.; Rear-Admiral H. M. Burrough, C.B., and Rear-Admiral E. de F. Renouf, C.V.O.

Command of Battle Squadron, Acting-Rear-Admiral H. B. Rawlings, O.B.E., A.D.C.

Command of Aircraft-Carrier Squadron, Rear-Admiral A. L. St. G. Lyster, C.V.O., D.S.O.

Command of Special Service Squadron, Acting Rear-Admiral R. L. Burnett, O.B.E., A.D.C.

Light Coastal Forces, Rear-Admiral P. K. Kekewich.

**AIRCRAFT PRODUCTION.**—Admiral Sir Noel Laurence, K.C.B., D.S.O., has been appointed as Chief Naval Representative at the Ministry of Aircraft Production with effect from 13th January. He will be responsible to the Board of Admiralty and to the Minister of Aircraft Production for overseeing the development and production of aircraft and their equipment for naval requirements.

**ADMIRAL COMMANDING RESERVES.**—Rear-Admiral John G. P. Vivian, C.B., has been appointed to succeed Admiral Laurence as Admiral Commanding Reserves, and will take over these duties in March. Meanwhile, the duties will be carried out by Rear-Admiral Vernon S. Butler, D.S.O.

#### FLAG LIST PROMOTIONS

**WIDER SELECTION.**—On 14th December, it was announced that the Admiralty had had under consideration the present system of promotion to Rear-Admiral and had decided to widen the field of selection for promotion in order that Captains of outstanding merit may rise to Flag rank earlier than had been possible. Under the former system, promotions to Rear-Admiral were made half-yearly from the top of the Captains' List, those officers whom it was decided not to employ as Flag Officers being placed on the Retired List on promotion. The new scheme, to come into effect with the next batch of promotions early in the New Year, will permit the Admiralty to select Captains from the upper five years of the list



for promotion to Rear-Admiral without consideration of their place on the list. This will mean, in effect, that younger Captains of outstanding ability who have the qualifications and necessary experience to fit them for Flag appointments afloat will be eligible for promotion to Rear-Admiral.

The first promotions under the new scheme were made with effect from 15th January, 1941, and published on that date, as follows:—

**PROMOTED TO REAR-ADMIRAL.**—Captain Harold T. Baillie-Grohman, D.S.O., O.B.E., A.D.C., Captain Charles E. B. Simeon, A.D.C., Captain (acting Rear-Admiral) Henry B. Rawlings, O.B.E., A.D.C., Captain (acting Rear-Admiral) Robert L. Burnett, O.B.E., A.D.C., Captain (Commodore 2nd Class) Frank H. Pegram, D.S.O., Captain Louis H. K. Hamilton, D.S.O., and Captain Irvine G. Glennie.

**PROMOTIONS TO ADMIRAL.**—Vice-Admiral (acting Admiral) Sir Andrew B. Cunningham, K.C.B., D.S.O., has been promoted to Admiral, to date 3rd January. Vice-Admiral Sir Max K. Horton, K.C.B., D.S.O., has been promoted to Admiral, to date 9th January.

**PROMOTIONS TO VICE-ADMIRAL.**—Rear-Admiral (acting Vice-Admiral) Henry D. Pridham-Wippell, C.B., C.V.O., has been promoted to Vice-Admiral, to date 3rd January. Rear-Admiral Henry R. Moore, C.B., C.V.O., D.S.O., has been promoted to Vice-Admiral, to date 9th January.

#### HONOURS AND AWARDS

On 18th November, it was announced that the King had approved the award of the Victoria Cross to the late Captain Edward Stephen Fogarty Fegen, R.N., commanding the armed merchant cruiser "Jervis Bay," for valour in challenging hopeless odds and giving his life to save the many ships it was his duty to protect. The "Jervis Bay" was escorting 38 merchantmen on 5th November. On sighting a powerful German warship he at once drew out from the convoy and made straight for the enemy. He brought his ship between the raider and her prey, so that the merchant ships were able to scatter. Outranged, crippled at once, in flames, and hit by heavy salvos, H.M.S. "Jervis Bay" held the enemy's fire for nearly an hour before she sank, but of the 38 ships in her convoy at least 33 were saved.

The first awards to naval personnel of the newly-instituted George Cross were announced on 21st December. The King approved the posthumous award of this decoration to Lieutenant-Commander Richard John Hammersley Ryan, R.N., and C.P.O. Reginald Vincent Ellingworth, for great gallantry and undaunted devotion to duty. The King also approved the award of the George Cross, for great gallantry and undaunted devotion to duty, to Sub-Lieutenant Peter Victor Danckwerts, R.N.V.R.

A number of awards of the D.S.O., D.S.C., O.B.E., and other honours were also made to officers and men of the Royal Navy and the Merchant Navy during the quarter.

#### PERSONNEL

**COMMISSIONS.**—For the guidance of those seeking temporary commissions in the Navy for the period of the War, the Admiralty have issued full details of the procedure in force for providing officers in the large numbers required for the expanding fleets. Copies of the announcement can be obtained by application to the Secretary of the Admiralty, C. W. Branch, Whitehall, S.W.1.

**SEA CADETS.**—In January, a special avenue of entry into the Royal Navy was instituted by the Admiralty for boys of the Sea Cadet Corps organized and main-

tained by the Navy League. Such boys may enter at the age of 17 as signalmen or telegraphists if they can pass the necessary test. They will then be drafted direct to a naval signal school, where they will need a shorter course than those entered without preliminary training.

**RELEASE OF SEAMEN.**—Under the Naval and Marine Forces (Temporary Release from Service) Bill, the text of which was issued on 5th December, any naval seaman or marine may, on the order of the Admiralty, be released from his service at any time during the War. So long as the order remains in force, he shall be in the position in which he would be had he been transferred to the Reserve. Any order made may be revoked and a man ordered to complete his service.

#### WEI-HAI-WEI

In November, in accordance with the intention previously announced, the personnel and stores of the British naval sick quarters at Wei-Hai-Wei—the only naval establishment maintained there for some years, were withdrawn for the duration of the War.

On 16th December, the correspondent of *The Times* at Shanghai stated that Japanese Press despatches from Wei-Hai-Wei reported that Liukung Island, "after being left to the British Navy for 40 years," had become a Chinese naval station with the formal handing over to the Nanking Government, headed by Wang Ching-wei, of nine Chinese warships seized by the Japanese Navy.

#### MISCELLANEOUS

**PICTURES OF LINCOLN.**—The First Lord of the Admiralty has received from Colonel Frank Knox, Secretary of the United States Navy, two pictures of Abraham Lincoln. One will hang in the wardroom of H.M.S. "Lincoln," a destroyer recently transferred to the Royal Navy from the U.S. Navy, and the other in the First Lord's room at the Admiralty. In acknowledging the presentation, Mr. Alexander wrote to Colonel Knox: "No gift from you could have been more happily chosen, expressing as it does your sympathy in the struggle for the preservation of human liberty, the cause to which Abraham Lincoln devoted his life."

**AMBULANCES FROM URUGUAY.**—Two ambulances for the use of the Navy, given by residents in Uruguay in memory of the officers and men who lost their lives in the battle of the River Plate, were handed over to the First Lord of the Admiralty on the Horse Guards Parade on 10th January. The presentation was made on behalf of the donors by Lord Ebbisham, Chairman of the Comforts Committee of the British Red Cross.

#### THE MERCHANT NAVY

**R.N. TRAINING FOR SEAMEN.**—A scheme was announced in January whereby volunteers for sea service registering under the Military Training Act for whom there are no immediate vacancies in the Royal Navy may be given the option of being trained for the Merchant Navy as an alternative to service in the Army. Such men if accepted for sea service may join the Naval Reserve for six months training, after which, although they remain formally members of the Naval Reserve, they will be employed in the Merchant Navy at civilian rates of pay and conditions of employment. After two years of such service they will have the option of re-entering the Navy as able seamen "for hostilities only" if the War continues. Those who cease to serve in the Merchant Navy, except for short periods between engagements, will be liable to discharge from the Naval Reserve and would then become liable to be called up for military service.

**SHIP CONSTRUCTION.**—Replying to a question in Parliament on 12th December, Mr. Attlee, Lord Privy Seal, said he was aware that the current rate of merchant ship losses demanded the utmost efforts to make them good. He continued: The Prime Minister does not think that anything would be gained by a separate department concerned solely with merchant shipping. This is in the hands of a member of the Board of Admiralty appointed for that purpose, for which he has a special staff. Our output of merchant ships is mainly determined by the total amount of shipbuilding labour and materials available. Close co-ordination of mercantile and naval requirements is therefore of great importance, and this can best be attained by having one department responsible for both programmes.

**LLOYD'S WAR MEDAL.**—The Committee of Lloyd's has decided, with the approval of the Admiralty and the Ministry of Shipping, to strike a new medal to be bestowed on officers and men of the Merchant Navy and Fishing Fleets in cases of exceptional gallantry at sea in time of war. It will be known as "Lloyd's War Medal for Bravery at Sea," and has been designed by Mr. Allan G. Wyon, F.R.B.S., members of whose family have designed all the Lloyd's medals since the first, "for saving life at sea" was instituted in 1836. The ribbon is in blue and silver, similar in design to that of the ribbon for Lloyd's Meritorious Medal, but with the colours reversed.

#### WOMEN'S ROYAL NAVAL SERVICE

The Duchess of Kent, Commandant of the Women's Royal Naval Service, in a broadcast talk on 20th January, said that W.R.N.S. officers were promoted from the ranks, and therefore understood the conditions of life and work among the ratings. During last year, an average of thirty ratings a month were made officers, and about one-third of them were responsible for welfare and discipline. The remaining two-thirds were employed on duties which would otherwise be performed by naval officers, such as cyphering or secretarial and confidential work, thus enabling officers to be released for more active duties with the Fleet. An appeal was made for more recruits. The address is: The Women's Royal Naval Service, 50, Charing Cross, London, S.W.1.

#### ROYAL MARINES

**TEMPORARY COMMISSIONS.**—The Admiralty announced on 18th December a limited number of vacancies for temporary commissions in the Royal Marines for candidates between 19½ and 38 years. Six days later it was announced that sufficient applications for these commissions had been received and the list was closed.

**GENERAL LIST.**—Lieutenant-General R. D. H. Lough, D.S.O., O.B.E., has been placed on the retired list at his own request, to date 1st January, 1941. Major-General A. L. Forster, C.B., D.S.O., has been promoted to Lieutenant-General, to date 1st January, 1941. Colonel-Commandant (temporary Brigadier) T. L. Hunton, M.V.O., O.B.E., A.D.C., has been promoted to Major-General, to date 1st October, 1940. Colonel-Commandant (temporary Brigadier) R. C. A. Glunicke, A.D.C., has been promoted to Major-General, to date 3rd October, 1940.

**DOMINIONS AND COLONIES****AUSTRALIA**

In a review of the achievements of the Royal Australian Navy in 1940, Mr. Hughes said they had been carried out without the loss of any ship, and he revealed that 90 per cent. of Australia's naval vessels were now in Australian waters. "Apart from co-operating with the Royal Navy in patrolling trade routes," added Mr. Hughes, "our ships have already sunk one enemy cruiser, destroyed several submarines, destroyers and torpedo boats, shot down enemy aircraft, and captured merchant ships. Our minesweepers, sloops and auxiliary craft have been constantly patrolling our long coastline, and we have trained hundreds of ratings for gun crews in merchantmen, many of whom have been in action."

On 5th December it was announced that the Australian War Cabinet had approved the construction of a new naval depot to cost £A.290,000, to meet the continued expansion of the Royal Australian Navy, the personnel of which had risen to over 15,000.

A sloop of 800-900 tons, the first naval vessel built in Melbourne since the last war, was launched there on 10th December. She is of similar design to vessels launched in other Australian States, a number of which are already in commission.

**CANADA**

In a speech in the Canadian House of Commons on 20th November, Mr. Angus Macdonald, Minister for the Navy, said there were then 155 vessels and over 14,000 men in the Navy, and by the end of the coming fiscal year it was planned to increase this by 100 vessels and 10,000 men. It was proposed to establish a naval college in Canada, and it was also hoped to build destroyers and, perhaps, cruisers in Canadian shipyards.

Mr. Vincent Massey, High Commissioner for Canada, in a speech in London on 22nd January, said: "Our Naval Service is not large, but it has eight times the personnel and ten times the number of ships which it had at the beginning of the War, and the increase will continue at the present rate in both ships and men for the next twelve months. In addition to the crews of Canadian vessels now in British waters on convoy and other duties, several hundred officers and ratings of our Naval Service are proud to be serving with the Royal Navy."

On 1st January, the Canadian Department of Munitions and Supply announced that contracts had been placed for twenty anti-submarine craft of a new type, to be known as Fairmile patrol boats. The hulls, of double-planed mahogany, and each 112 ft. long, will be built in Canadian shipyards, and they will be equipped with petrol engines capable of giving a high speed.

On 19th January, the Department announced that contracts had been placed on behalf of the British Government for eighteen merchant vessels, each of a dead-weight capacity of 9,300 tons, designed specially for convoy work, with power and equipment of an economical character. The contracts have been divided equally between shipbuilding companies at Quebec, Montreal and Vancouver.

**NEWFOUNDLAND**

The 13th Newfoundland Naval Contingent arrived at a British West Coast port on 27th December. The men were welcomed by Mr. D. J. Davies, Newfoundland Trade Commissioner.

## NEW ZEALAND

On 12th January, the New Zealand Prime Minister, Mr. Fraser, announced that the Government had completed arrangements to provide a hospital ship. The necessary alterations were to be put in hand immediately and the ship commissioned as early as possible. Negotiations were in progress for a second hospital ship.

## SOUTH AFRICA

On 13th January, it was announced at Capetown that a flotilla of South African minesweepers had recently left South African waters to co-operate with the Royal Navy elsewhere. This was the first time South African warships had left their home waters for service elsewhere.

## FOREIGN

## GERMANY

The following appears to be the situation as regards the principal units of the main German fleet:—

BATTLESHIPS	...	Two 35,000-ton "Bismark" class (practically completed).
		Two old "Schliessen" class.
BATTLE CRUISERS	...	Two "Scharnhorst" class.
ARMoured SHIPS	...	Two "Lützow" (formerly "Deutschland") class.
AIRCRAFT CARRIER	...	One, "Graf Zepellin."
8-IN. CRUISERS	...	Three "Hipper" class (one completing).
6-IN. CRUISERS	...	Three "Leipsig" class.
		One "Emden" class.
DESTROYERS	...	About 15.

## GREECE

**SUCCESSFUL SUBMARINE ATTACKS.**—During the past quarter Greek submarines have been operating with much success in the Adriatic. The "Papanicolis" sank three large transports in convoy on 24th December last. It is estimated that their combined tonnage was between 25,000 and 30,000 tons. The "Katsonis" disabled a tanker by gun fire, with the result that it drifted ashore and was wrecked. On 29th December the submarine "Proteus" sank a transport of 11,452 tons. Reports of Italian prisoners indicate that two other large ships acting as transports were sunk while carrying reinforcements to Albania.

## ITALY

**BATTLESHIPS.**—The following appears to be the situation as regards Italy's battle fleet:—

Two 35,000-ton "Littorio" class ("Littorio" was badly damaged in the raid on Taranto).

Three 23,000-ton "Cesare" class (a fourth was sunk, and one of the three badly damaged in the raid on Taranto).

**TOBRUK CASUALTY.**—In the course of operations which resulted in the capture of Tobruk, the old cruiser "San Giorgio" of 9,232 tons was set on fire and badly damaged. She had already been beached as the result of injuries sustained in an air attack last June, but she was still able to take part in the defence of the port for which her four 10-in. guns were a useful addition to the land artillery.



**OTHER LOSSES.**—In addition to the losses published in last quarter's JOURNAL a torpedo-boat was sunk by our cruisers on the 10th January, and soon afterwards H.M. submarine "Thunderbolt" (formerly "Thetis") torpedoed an Italian submarine.

#### JAPAN

There is some reason to believe that the ship which is reported to have been launched from the Mitsubishi Yard at Nagasaki on the 5th November last may be the third of the new battleships. These are reputed to be vessels of 40,000 tons, but no details of them have yet been released.

#### POLAND

A successor to the submarine "Orzel" was launched from a British shipyard in January. It will be recalled that the "Orzel" escaped from internment at the beginning of the war and finally succeeded in working her way out of the Baltic and reached England.

#### UNITED STATES

**LEASED BASES.**—An announcement by the Navy Department on the 18th November stated that all the British authorities concerned have now agreed to the following sites being leased to the United States Government in connection with the proposed establishment of American Bases:—

#### BERMUDA

For Landplane Base—Long Bird Island.

For Seaplane Base, Naval Base and Garrison Area—Part of St. David's Island and certain small islands lying close off the Southern shore of St. David's Island.

For Explosive Storages—The small islands between St. David's and Hamilton Island along the eastern entrance to Castle Harbour.

#### BAHAMAS

The United States Government to have the use of the waters of Abraham Bay and of a small area of land adjacent thereto on Mayaguana Island.

#### JAMAICA

Fleet Anchorage at Portland Bight.

Land area, to include Goat Island and the adjacent bays.

An area on Portland Bight and Portland Island for defence batteries.

Area of approximately 100 acres near Williams Field Station for recreational purposes and a hospital mess.

Area South of Maypen along Bakers Canal for emergency and auxiliary landing ground.

Right to develop resources and facilities for the Port Royal Dockyard under British control.

Reciprocal rights to be granted to United States and British military aircraft to use the air fields established by the United States Government and His Majesty's Government, the controlling authorities to have the first call on the available accommodation.

## ANTIGUA

An area measuring about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles by 1 mile on Parham Sound opposite Long Island.

The narrow peninsula known as Crabs, on the East side of Parham Harbour.

## ST. LUCIA

A seaplane base at Gros Islet Bay, approximately 120 acres.

The question of further facilities at St. Lucia is still under consideration.

## BRITISH GUIANA

A patrol aeroplane squadron base with an aerodrome 25 miles up the river Demerara.

A seaplane base near Suddie on the mouth of the river Essequibo.

## NEWFOUNDLAND

Air base and army training ground at Argentina Peninsula and 2 square miles South of Little Placentia Harbour.

Naval base site of approximately 22 acres on the South side of St. John's Harbour.

Site for Army Defensive Force of approximately 160 acres North of Quidi Vidi Lake.

## TRINIDAD

The situation is still under consideration.

## ARMY NOTES

### HIS MAJESTY THE KING

The King, attended by Lieut.-Colonel the Hon. Piers Legh, inspected military units in the Aldershot Command on October 9th, and in the Eastern Command on October 30th and 31st.

**AIDES-DE-CAMP GENERAL TO HIS MAJESTY.**—The King has been graciously pleased to approve of the following appointments as Aides-de-Camp General:—

General Sir Robert Gordon-Finlayson, K.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O. ; 8th June, 1940.

General Sir John Dill, K.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O. ; 1st July, 1940.

General the Viscount Gort, V.C., G.C.B., C.B.E., D.S.O., M.V.O., M.C. ; 20th July, 1940.

**AIDE-DE-CAMP TO THE KING.**—Colonel (temporary Brigadier) G. O. de R. Channer, C.B.E., M.C., I.A., to be Aide-de-Camp to the King ; 16th September, 1940.

**To be Honorary Physicians to the King.**—The King has been graciously pleased to approve of the following appointments:—

Colonel D. M. McWhae, C.M.G., C.B.E., V.D., Australian Army Medical Corps.

Colonel F. T. Bowerbank, O.B.E., E.D., New Zealand Medical Corps.

**To be Honorary Surgeons to the King:—**

Colonel R. W. Whiston-Walsh, D.S.O., V.D., Australian Army Medical Corps.

Colonel K. McCormick, D.S.O., E.D., New Zealand Medical Corps.

**COLONELS OF REGIMENTS.**—The King has been graciously pleased to approve of the following appointments:—

Lieut.-General Sir J. R. E. Charles, K.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., to be Colonel, King George V's Own Bengal Sappers and Miners ; 1st November, 1940.

Major-General F. A. Wilson, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., to be Colonel Commandant, Royal Artillery.

**THE VICTORIA CROSS.**—The King has been graciously pleased to approve of the award of the Victoria Cross to the undermentioned:—

Lieutenant (acting Captain) E. C. T. Wilson, The East Surrey Regiment, attached Somaliland Camel Corps.

### APPOINTMENTS AND PROMOTIONS

The War Office has announced the following appointments and promotions:—

The undermentioned Colonels (Acting Major-Generals) to be Major-Generals:—

A. C. Fuller, O.B.E., A.M.I.E.E. ; 15th August, 1940.

N. M. de la P. Beresford-Peirse, D.S.O., A.D.C. ; 31st August, 1940.

The undermentioned Colonels (temporary Brigadiers) to be acting Major-Generals :—

M. D. Gambier-Parry, M.C., A.D.C. ; 6th August, 1940.

E. B. B. Hawkins, D.S.O., O.B.E. ; 24th September, 1940.

Major-General L. V. Bond, C.B., to be Lieut.-General ; 1st October, 1940.

Colonel H. C. Cole, C.B.E., F.S.I., to be local Major-General ; 8th October, 1940.

Lieut.-General G. J. Giffard, C.B., D.S.O., to be a G.O.C. ; 26th June, 1940.

Colonel (acting Brigadier) J. T. Crocker, D.S.O., M.C., to be a Commander, with acting rank of Major-General ; 18th September, 1940.

Major-General S. R. Wason, M.C., to be specially employed ; 24th September, 1940.

Colonel (temporary Brigadier) R. B. Pargiter, to be a Commander, with acting rank of Major-General ; 10th January, 1940.

Major-General R. C. Priest, M.D., F.R.C.P., K.H.P., to be Inspector of Medical Services ; 7th August, 1940.

Major-General A. G. Cunningham, D.S.O., M.C., to be specially employed with acting rank of Lieut.-General ; 19th October, 1940.

Colonel (temporary Brigadier) F. K. Simmons, M.V.O., O.B.E., M.C., to be a Commander, with acting rank of Major-General ; 1st October, 1940.

Lieut.-General Sir Archibald Wavell, K.C.B., C.M.G., M.C., to be General ; 1st October, 1940.

Major-General (acting Lieut.-General) E. A. Osborne, C.B., D.S.O., to be Lieut.-General ; 1st October, 1940.

Major-General (acting Lieut.-General) H. R. S. Massy, C.B., D.S.O., M.C., to be temporary Lieut.-General ; 25th October, 1940.

The undermentioned Colonels (acting Major-Generals) to be Major-Generals :—

M. D. Gambier-Parry, M.C., A.D.C. ; 1st October, 1940.

W. Cave-Browne, C.B.E., D.S.O., M.C. ; 1st October, 1940.

Colonel (temporary Brigadier) W. G. H. Vickers, O.B.E., I.A., to be Major-General ; 15th September, 1940.

Major-General R. H. Dewing, D.S.O., M.C., from a Director, to be specially employed ; 27th October, 1940.

Colonel (temporary Brigadier) J. N. Kennedy, M.C., to be a Director, with acting rank of Major-General ; 14th October, 1940.

Colonel (acting Major-General) J. G. W. Clark, M.C., to be temporary Major-General ; 1st November, 1940.

The undermentioned to be Commanders :—

Major-General E. L. Morris, O.B.E., M.C., from Director of Staff Duties ; 1st November, 1940.

Colonel (temporary Brigadier) G. J. P. St. Clair, D.S.O., with acting rank of Major-General ; 30th August, 1940.

Colonel (temporary Brigadier) H. M. Gale, C.B.E., M.C., to be Major-General i/c Administration, with acting rank of Major-General ; 23rd October, 1940.

Colonel (temporary Brigadier) A. E. Nye, M.C., to be specially employed with acting rank of Major-General; 1st November, 1940.

Colonel (temporary Brigadier) G. I. Gartlan, C.B.E., D.S.O., M.C., to be a Commander with acting rank of Major-General; 15th August—17th September, 1940.

The undermentioned Colonels (acting Major-Generals) to be Major-Generals:—

R. C. Money, M.C.; 1st October, 1940.

A. V. T. Wakely, D.S.O., M.C.; 1st October, 1940.

V. V. Pope, C.B.E., D.S.O., M.C.; 26th October, 1940.

Colonel (temporary Brigadier) D. H. Pratt, D.S.O., M.C., to be local Major-General; 6th November, 1940.

Major-General G. N. Macready, C.M.G., D.S.O., O.B.E., M.C., to be specially employed; 15th October, 1940.

The undermentioned Major-Generals to be Commanders with acting rank of Lieut.-General; 11th November, 1940.

S. R. Wason, M.C.

M. F. Grove-White, D.S.O., O.B.E.

H. G. Martin, D.S.O., O.B.E.

Colonel (temporary Brigadier) N. M. Ritchie, C.B.E., D.S.O., M.C., to be a Commander, with acting rank of Major-General; 28th October, 1940.

Major-General Sir William M. Thomson, K.C.M.G., C.B., M.C., resumed his substantive rank of Lieut.-General; 22nd November, 1940.

Colonel (acting Major-General) S. C. M. Archibald, M.C., to be a Commander and to retain the acting rank of Major-General; 11th November, 1940.

The undermentioned Colonels (temporary Brigadiers) to be Commanders, with acting rank of Major-General:—

E. V. H. Fairclough, D.S.O., M.C.; 12th November, 1940.

R. F. E. Whittaker, O.B.E., T.D., T.A.; 12th November, 1940.

Colonel (temporary Brigadier) H. T. D. Hickman, O.B.E., M.C., to be District Commander, India; 2nd November, 1940.

Colonel (acting Major-General) K. M. Loch, M.C., to be temporary Major-General; 25th November, 1940.

The undermentioned to be Commanders:—Major-General R. N. O'Connor, C.B., D.S.O., M.C., to be acting Lieut.-General; 3rd November, 1940.

Colonel (temporary Brigadier) L. Browning, O.B.E., M.C., to be temporary Major-General; 14th November, 1940.

Colonel (temporary Brigadier) J. E. T. Younger, to be acting Major-General; 15th November, 1940.

Colonel (temporary Brigadier) D. Paige, M.C., to be acting Major-General; 16th November, 1940.

Colonel (temporary Brigadier) O.M., Lund, D.S.O., to be Major-General, R.A., with acting rank of Major-General; 11th November, 1940.

Colonel (acting Major-General) A. Carton de Wiart, V.C., C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., to be temporary Major-General; 28th November, 1940.



The undermentioned Colonels (temporary Brigadiers) to be Commanders, with acting rank of Major-General:—

J. G. des R. Swayne, C.B.E., ; 6th October, 1940.

G. A. Rickards, D.S.O., M.C. ; 15th November, 1940.

Major-General T. R. Eastwood, D.S.O., M.C., to be Director-General, Home Guard, with acting rank of Lieut.-General ; 20th November, 1940.

Colonel (acting Major-General) R. F. Loch, C.B., to be temporary Major-General ; 2nd September, 1939.

Colonel (temporary Brigadier) J. R. Hartwell, D.S.O., to be a District Commander, India, with acting rank of Major-General ; 26th October, 1940.

Colonel (temporary Brigadier) T. W. Corbett, M.C., I.A., to be acting Major-General while employed as Divisional Commander ; 1st September, 1940.

Colonel (acting Major-General) W. H. G. Baker, D.S.O., O.B.E., I.A., to be Major-General ; 26th October, 1940.

Colonel (temporary Brigadier) H. T. D. Hickman, C.B., O.B.E., M.C., I.A., to be Major-General ; 2nd November, 1940.

Captain (Brevet-Major) M. J. H. Bruce, R.A.S.C., to be acting Major-General whilst employed as D.O.S. (E) ; 20th November, 1940.

Colonel (temporary Brigadier) F. H. N. Davidson, D.S.O., M.C., to be a Director, with acting rank of Major-General ; 16th December, 1940.

Colonel (temporary Brigadier) C. G. Woolner, M.C., to be a Commander, with acting rank of Major-General ; 30th November, 1940.

Colonel (temporary Brigadier) L. E. Dennys, M.C., to be specially employed with acting rank of Major-General ; 18th December, 1940.

The undermentioned to be Commanders:—

Major-General D. F. Anderson, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., with acting rank of Lieut.-General ; 14th December, 1940.

Colonel (temporary Major-General) C. C. Malden.

Colonel (temporary Brigadier) J. L. I. Hawkesworth, O.B.E., to be Director of Military Training, War Office, with acting rank of Major-General ; 9th December, 1940.

#### GENERAL

In the main, the Royal Artillery's task is to complete armament with weapons which were in use in France. Certain new developments are, however, in progress according to *The Times*' Military Correspondent. The first is the simplification of manoeuvre, and the second is the production of fresh types of gun.

The first requires no elaboration. The second is actuated by the desire to obtain both increased range and shell power. Increased range gives more flexibility by enabling the same number of guns to cover a wider frontage ; it also facilitates both defence in depth and counter-battery work.

Increased shell power is called for by heavier armour of tanks.

#### HOME GUARD TRAINING

A central training school for the Home Guard, which is to take over the functions of Osterley Park, was opened on October 19th at a large country estate in the Home Counties. Here, in ideal conditions, commanders and section leaders

from all over the country, nominated by regional headquarters, will take an in ensive course in static defence and guerrilla warfare which will prepare them as instructors to their own units.

The school is officially directed by the War Office under a Commandant and staff of the Regular Army. This arrangement will provide far greater facilities in the matter of equipment, such as small arms and smoke bombs, though the improvisation and imaginative quality of the old course, based largely on experiences with the International Brigade, are retained and encouraged. Captain F. Wintringham and many of his fellow instructors have come over from Osterley Park, and their services will be augmented by War Office instructors.

Students are accommodated in a part of the house, which the owner of the estate has very kindly placed at their disposal. They will now travel on a free railway warrant and will be issued with Army rations prepared by a regular staff of cooks. It is proposed that the rations may be increased by a personal contribution of a shilling a day. At present the course lasts for nearly three days, from 7 o'clock in the morning till 10 at night, but it is hoped later on to extend it to five days. Though the training of Home Guard instructors will be centralized at this school, there are plans to extend the scheme by forming special wings at the small weapon training schools in the various Commands.

#### IMPORTANT ROLE

Sir Edward Grigg, Under Secretary for War, visited the school on October 19th while the students were engaged in a mock attack against parachutists behind a realistic smoke screen. In a short address he spoke of the high value placed on the Home Guard from the Commander-in-Chief downwards; the Prime Minister had said that they were as much a part of the armed forces of the Crown as the Grenadier Guards, and they were determined that the enemy should regard them as such. Their role, which would become increasingly important as more of the Field Army were sent abroad, was aptly summed up in the old motto "Watch and Ward." It was the official view that everything must be avoided which could possibly justify the enemy in looking upon the Home Guard as *francs-tireurs*. Their strength was now 1,700,000 men, about a third of whom were engaged as factory guards in small units. A full issue of rifles and machine-guns would be complete in the near future. The proportion already issued was very high, but it had naturally gone to the most threatened areas of the country. The War Office had worked out a rather complicated garrison for factories, which on an average would need only one rifle to every three men.

It had been decided to provide every guard with battle-dress where he was not already equipped with the original denim garment, and within the next few weeks no one should be without it. Already 1,600,000 battle dresses, or the corresponding garments in serge, had been issued, and the chief difficulty was in distribution. A more difficult problem was in the matter of greatcoats, which were needed in vast quantities by the Regular Army and the Dominion contingents; and as an alternative to civilian garments, which must be severely discouraged, there would be a large issue of lined, waterproof trench capes, providing adequate warmth and protection. The greatcoats would come along in due course as the demand on them eased.

Then there was the difficult business of steel helmets. The output was going up and a greater proportion of them was reaching the Home Guard. They refused, however, to compromise with the various forms of mild steel on the market; here, again, the helmets were being issued to the most dangerous places and soon they

would be getting many thousands every week. It was not a matter of the supply of metal, but of rolling and shaping the helmet, which was an expert process. The sizes of the Home Guard were on the whole rather larger than the sizes of the Regular Army, but they would be able to face the winter. The whole country had set its heart on their being properly equipped and honoured.

In reply to a question about the discipline of the force, Sir Edward Grigg said that it was not desired that the Home Guard should follow any sort of set pattern. It was better that it should conform to that part of the country to which it belonged. He did not like the suggestion that the spirit of the Home Guard needed shaping on disciplinary lines.

#### OFFICERS OF THE HOME GUARD

The names of some of the chairmen of the Selection Boards for the granting of Commissions to members of the Home Guard, the new method of financing the Guard, and arrangements for the provision of transport facilities were announced by the War Office on December 22nd.

The following retired officers are among those who have been approved by the Secretary of State, personally, as chairmen of Selection Boards. They have all been in close touch with the Home Guard, and are fully conversant with its special needs :—

Field-Marshal Lord Cavan, General Sir Ivo Vesey, General Sir Archibald Cameron, General Sir Charles Grant, General Sir Cecil Romer, General Sir Charles Deedes, Lieutenant-General Sir James W. O'Dowda, Major-General W. N. Herbert, Major-General Lord Lock, Brigadier-General L. P. Evans, V.C., Colonel Y. B. McKaig.

#### CAPITATION GRANT

A capitation grant was introduced on 1st January to replace the former interim grants made to Territorial Army Associations. This grant is intended to cover, among other items, administrative expenses in connection with clerks (including clerical and office expenses in units and headquarters). Based on the actual costs which have been studied since the inception of the Home Guard, it will be at the yearly rate of 12s. 6d. a head for ordinary Home Guard units, and 4s. a head for units composed of factory personnel. The grant is not intended to cover the cost of training items, accommodation, equipment, and stores, nor will it be used for travelling expenses or subsistence allowance.

Instructions have been issued that members of the Home Guard who are over 65 but who are definitely required by units may continue in the Guard if fit for their work both at present and in an emergency. Their cases will be reviewed every six months. They will be entitled to the same financial benefits in the event of disability or death as other members of the Home Guard.

Instructions have been issued to facilitate the provision of temporary transport for the conveyance of stores and personnel. If military transport is available locally, the Military Area Commander can sanction its use.

#### WAR DESPATCHES

Sir E. Grigg, Under Secretary for War, in a written reply to a question in the House of Commons said :—

"It has been decided that despatches will not be published until after the War, for the reason that in the unusual circumstances of this war it would be impossible to publish them without giving useful information to the enemy.

"The despatches on the campaign in the Low Countries and in France were written with a view to giving His Majesty's Government the fullest possible narrative of events. A narrative covering the period may be published at a later date. I desire, however, to emphasize that the mass of information contained in the despatches and reports is being collated and carefully examined, so that the lessons to be derived from it may be applied by the Service Departments concerned."

### SOUTH AFRICA

It is officially announced that a new Empire record has been created by South African troops in Kenya. This was for a forced march in which the troops travelled 38½ miles in 11½ hours, beating the previous record held by an Indian regiment for 34 miles. The march began at 4 a.m. and the men rested for 10 minutes of every hour until breakfast. During the midday heat they rested for three hours and reached camp at 8.30 in the evening. Their route lay across Kenya's most difficult country and the men sang as they marched with full kit. Only two of the 150 who took part in this successful attempt to break the previous record failed to complete the march.

### NOTICE

Copies of "Notes on the Attack of Troop-carrying Aircraft," and of "Some Notes and Further Notes on the Attack of Low-Flying Aircraft by Rifle Fire," three pamphlets by Colonel H. W. Hill, C.M.G., D.S.O., are available at the Royal Artillery Institution, Woolwich, S.E.18, price 1d. per pamphlet (postage extra).

## AIR NOTES

### ROYAL AIR FORCE

#### H.M. THE KING

The King has graciously consented to become Air Commodore-in-Chief of the new Air Training Corps, the formation of which was announced on 10th January.

#### THE AIR COUNCIL

On 4th November, it was announced that Air Chief Marshal Sir Wilfrid Freeman, K.C.B., D.S.O., M.C., had been appointed Vice-Chief of the Air Staff in place of Air Marshal Sir Richard Peirse who had recently taken up the appointment of Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Bomber Command.

On the same date, Air Vice-Marshal Philip Babington, M.C., A.F.C., promoted to Air Marshal (acting) from 18th November, was appointed Air Member for Personnel, in place of Air Marshal E. L. Gossage.

Air Vice Marshal A. T. Harris, O.B.E., A.F.C., was on 18th November appointed to be Deputy Chief of the Air Staff, in place of Air Vice-Marshal W. S. Douglas.

On 14th November, it was announced that, on resuming his post as Chairman and Managing Director of Vickers Armstrongs, Ltd., Sir Charles Craven had tendered his resignation from the Air Council to the Secretary of State for Air, who had accepted it with regret. Sir Charles Craven had been an additional Member of the Air Council since April, 1940.

#### APPOINTMENTS

**FAR EAST.**—In view of the stage which has been reached in the defence dispositions in the territories in the Far East for the protection of which H.M. Government in the United Kingdom is responsible, and in order to ensure co-ordinated control, it was decided to create the appointment of a Commander-in-Chief, Far East, who will have under his command the General Officers Commanding Malaya, Burma, Hong Kong, and the Air Officer Commanding, Far East. The new Commander-in-Chief will consult and co-operate with the Naval Commanders-in-Chief, China and East Indies, and with the Commander-in-Chief, India, and it will also be his duty to maintain close touch with the Governors of Burma and the Colonies concerned and communicate with H.M. Governments in the Commonwealth of Australia and in New Zealand on all matters of interest to them. He will also be responsible for keeping in touch in defence matters with H.M. Representatives in the foreign countries in or concerned with the Far East.

Air Chief Marshal Sir Robert Brooke-Popham, G.C.V.O., K.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., A.F.C., has been selected for this appointment, with headquarters in Singapore. He arrived there by air on 14th November.

**MISSION TO U.S.A.**—On 18th November, it was announced that, at the special request of the Minister of Aircraft Production, Air Chief Marshal Sir Hugh Dowding, G.C.B., G.C.V.O., C.M.G., who had held the post of Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Fighter Command, since July, 1936, was being seconded to his department for special duty in the United States of America.



**FIGHTER COMMAND.**—Air Vice-Marshal W. S. Douglas, M.C., D.F.C., was promoted to Air Marshal (temporary) on appointment, to be Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Fighter Command, from a date in the near future, in succession to Air Chief Marshal Sir Hugh Dowding.

**MIDDLE EAST COMMAND.**—Air Vice-Marshal O. T. Boyd, C.B., O.B.E., M.C., A.F.C., was promoted to Air Marshal (acting) from 8th November, to be Deputy to the Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Middle East Command. On 21st November, the Air Ministry announced that Air Marshal Boyd had been reported missing while crossing the Mediterranean by air, and it was learned that he was a prisoner in Italian hands.

On 12th December, it was announced that Air Vice-Marshal A. W. Tedder, C.B., who had been granted the acting rank of Air Marshal from 29th November, had been appointed Deputy to the Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Middle East Command, and had arrived in Cairo to take up his duties.

Air Commodore Raymond Collishaw, D.S.O., O.B.E., D.S.C., D.F.C., it was announced on 12th December, had been placed in command of the aircraft taking part in the Western Desert attack.

**BALLOON COMMAND.**—On 18th November, it was announced that Air Marshal E. L. Gossage, C.B., C.V.O., D.S.O., had been appointed to be Air Officer Commanding, Balloon Command, in place of Air Vice-Marshal O. T. Boyd.

**BRITISH FORCES IN GREECE.**—On 18th November, it was announced that Air Commodore John H. D'Albiac, D.S.O., was in command of the British Forces in Greece with units of R.A.F. squadrons and of ancillary units for maintenance of the British Army under his control. He has been granted the acting rank of Air Vice-Marshal from 15th November, 1940.

**MEDICAL SERVICES.**—On 1st January, the Air Ministry announced that Air Vice-Marshal H. E. Whittingham, C.B.E., had been appointed to be Director-General of R.A.F. Medical Services on 1st March, 1941, in succession to Air Marshal Sir Victor Richardson, K.B.E., C.B., who completes his term of duty in that post on 28th February, 1941.

**HON. AIR COMMODORE, A.A.F.**—In the *London Gazette* on 20th December, it was announced that Wing Commander the Duke of Hamilton and Brandon, A.F.C., had been appointed Honorary Air Commodore, Auxiliary Air Force, to date 9th December, 1940.

#### PROMOTIONS

Air Vice-Marshal R. M. Hill, M.C., A.F.C., is granted the acting rank of Air Marshal, to date 29th November, 1940.

Air Vice-Marshal J. S. T. Bradley, C.B.E., is granted the acting rank of Air Marshal, to date 20th November, 1940.

Air Commodore J. O. Andrews, D.S.O., M.C., is granted the acting rank of Air Vice Marshal, to date 18th November, 1940.

Group Captain (acting Air Commodore) T. W. Elmhirst, A.F.C., is granted the acting rank of Air Vice-Marshal (unpaid), to date 2nd December, 1940.

The undermentioned Group Captains are promoted to the rank of Air Commodore (temporary), to date 1st December, 1940:—

A. W. Mylne, J. L. Vachell, M.C., A. D. Pryor, W. H. Dunn, D.S.C., H. H. MacL. Fraser, M. Thomas, D.F.C., A.F.C., R. B. Mansell, O.B.E.,

M. B. Frew, D.S.O., M.C., A.F.C., H. G. Bowen, M.B.E., B. McEntegart, A. S. Morris, O.B.E., J. H. Simpson, Hugh Leedham, O.B.E., O. G. W. G. Lywood, C.B.E., and R. S. Aitken, O.B.E., M.C., A.F.C.

TECHNICAL BRANCH.—Group Captain G. G. Dawson is promoted to the rank of Air Commodore (temporary) and is granted the acting rank of Air Vice-Marshal, to date 1st December, 1940.

#### RETIREMENTS

Air Vice-Marshal C. T. Maclean, C.B., D.S.O., M.C., is placed on the retired list, to date 27th December, 1940.

Group Captain A. G. Board, C.M.G., D.S.O., reverts to the retired list, 14th February, 1941, and resumes with effect from that date the rank of Air Commodore (seniority 1st January, 1928).

#### HONOURS AND AWARDS

On 15th November it was announced that the King had conferred the Victoria Cross on Flight Lieutenant J. B. Nicolson, No. 249 Squadron, in recognition of most conspicuous bravery. During an engagement with the enemy near Southampton, on 16th August, 1940, Flight Lieutenant Nicolson's aircraft was hit by four cannon shells, two of which wounded him whilst another set fire to the gravity tank. When about to abandon his aircraft owing to flames in the cockpit, he sighted an enemy fighter. This he attacked and shot down, although as a result of staying in his burning aircraft he sustained serious burns to his hands, face, neck and legs.

The V.C. awarded to Flight Lieutenant Nicolson was the first to be won by a fighter pilot since the War began.

Among a number of other awards announced during the last quarter, that of the Distinguished Flying Cross to Flight Lieutenant John Cunningham on 10th January was the first to be made to a night fighter pilot. The first award of the George Cross to an R.A.F. officer was announced on 18th December posthumously to Acting Squadron Leader E. L. Moxey, R.A.F. Volunteer Reserve, who lost his life in August while endeavouring to remove unexploded bombs at an aerodrome.

#### FORMATION OF ARMY CO-OPERATION COMMAND

Details of the scheme to provide for the various air requirements of the Army, and of the establishment of an Army Co-operation Command will be found on p. 54 of this Journal.

Air Marshal Sir Arthur Sheridan Barratt, K.C.B., C.M.G., M.C., was selected for appointment as Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Army Co-operation Command, to take up his duties on 20th November, 1940.

#### THE COASTAL COMMAND

In reply to a request for an assurance that there was no intention that the control of the R.A.F. Coastal Command should pass from the Air Ministry to any other department, the Prime Minister made the following statement in the House of Commons on 10th December, 1940 :—

"I see no reason to give any specific assurances which would tend to impair the responsibility of H.M. Government to Parliament for the proper conduct of

the War. It is my duty as Minister of Defence to review such questions from time to time in the light of current experience. I have come to the conclusion that while there is no need at the present time to change the position of the Coastal Command as part of the Royal Air Force, it is necessary that the Coastal Command should play a more important part than it has hitherto done in trade protection, and that for this purpose substantial increases, some of which have been already effected, will be necessary. Moreover, as the function of the Coastal Command squadrons is that of co-operation with the Royal Navy, the operational policy of the Command must be determined by the Admiralty, of course in consultation with the Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief. Excellent relations have been established since the War between the two Services, and the closest contact exists between the naval and air authorities. I am satisfied that the integrity of operational direction will be fully achieved."

#### INAUGURATION OF THE AIR TRAINING CORPS

It was announced on 10th January that the King had approved the constitution of an Air Training Corps which will be organized on a nation-wide basis. It will consist of University Air Squadrons, squadrons and flights formed at schools, and units organized locally. It will give young men at schools and universities and those who have left an opportunity to prepare themselves for service in the R.A.F. or the Fleet Air Arm. All boys of 16 and upward who are physically fit and desire to serve eventually in the R.A.F. or the F.A.A. will be eligible to join the Air Training Corps. Boys who are suitable for flying duties will carry out a syllabus like that of the Initial Training Wings of the R.A.F. Special courses will be given to those who are suitable for mechanical and wireless trades. Grants to cover the cost of training will be made by the Air Ministry. The Air Training Corps will, however, depend for many of its amenities on local support.

A post of Director of Pre-Entry Training at the Air Ministry has been created. The Trustees of Uppingham School have, at the request of the Air Council, agreed to release the Headmaster, Mr. J. F. Wolfenden, to fill this post for a period of six months. The Director will be responsible to Air Marshal A. G. R. Garrod, the Air Member for Training on the Air Council.

Responsibility for the training of all units and for the administration and recruitment of local units will be vested in a Commandant directly responsible to the Air Ministry. Air Commodore J. A. Chamier, who was closely associated with the development of the Air Defence Cadet Corps, was released from his other Air Force duties to become Commandant. The Air Sections of the Junior Training Corps at schools and the squadrons of the Air Defence Cadet Corps will become part of the Air Training Corps. The Air Training Corps was constituted as from 1st February.

#### EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES FOR AIR CREW CANDIDATES

Arrangements have been made for Local Education Authorities to give instruction at Air Ministry expense in mathematics and English for young men of 17½ and upward who are in all other respects suitable for air crew duties. After passing a selection board, they will be attested into the R.A.F.; but they will continue their civil occupation while they receive instruction. At the same time, they will have an opportunity of undergoing instruction in Service subjects with the local Air Training Corps.

### UNIVERSITY AIR SQUADRONS

The air squadrons at Oxford and Cambridge, which lapsed at the outbreak of war, were re-formed last term. Air squadrons are now to be formed at Aberdeen, Aberystwyth, Belfast, Durham, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, and St. Andrews.

### SHORT UNIVERSITY COURSES

There will be special courses at the Universities for young men who wish to serve as Pilots and Observers in the R.A.F. and are likely to be suitable for commissioned rank. These courses will last six months and will be taken between leaving school and the beginning of Service training. The expense of tuition and board and lodging will be paid by the Air Ministry, and the course will be allowed by the University authorities to count towards a degree if the candidate returns to the University after the War. On completion of the course, candidates will pass into the ranks and through the Service training schools. On passing out as qualified Pilots or Observers they will, if recommended, be commissioned in the R.A.F. Volunteer Reserve. The first course will start on or about 15th April. Candidates must be between the ages of  $17\frac{1}{2}$  and 18 years 8 months, and will be selected from nominations by headmasters of public and secondary schools.

### WOMEN'S AUXILIARY AIR FORCE

A new class of candidate, "Administrative," is in need of recruits in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force. Women with exceptional organizing ability are required, to supervise the administrative arrangements at R.A.F. stations and headquarters where numbers of W.A.A.F. personnel are engaged. The age limits are from 21 to 43, or up to 50 if the applicant had service in the last war.

Other grades in which recruits are needed include dental surgery attendants (18 to 43), cooks (18 to 47), radio operator (18 to 35), and the following (all 18 to 43): Morse slip readers (touch typists only), teleprinter operators, mess and kitchen staff, clerks (general duties), and equipment assistants.

Application should be made to the nearest Area Headquarters of the W.A.A.F. in London, Bristol, Birmingham, Sheffield, Manchester, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Cardiff, Glasgow and Belfast, or to the nearest Combined Recruiting Centre.

## DOMINIONS AND COLONIES

### EMPIRE AIR TRAINING SCHEME

In a speech in London on 22nd January, Mr. Vincent Massey, High Commissioner for Canada, reviewing the Canadian effort in the war, said that the Joint Air Training Plan, as important an enterprise as there is in the Empire to-day, is well ahead of schedule. The buildings and aerodromes which were due to be completed in 1941 were all finished last year. Instead of 33 training schools scheduled to be operating in December there were 48. The large number of officers and airmen in training at the end of the year exceeded by over a third the strength anticipated at that time.

The first contingent of airmen trained in Canada under the scheme arrived in London on 25th November, and were welcomed by Air Vice-Marshal C. W. H. Pulford, representing the R.A.F., and Air Commodore L. F. Stevenson, R.C.A.F.

Liaison Officer in this country. All the members of this contingent were Canadian air observers, officers and sergeants, with an average age of 24, and were to be posted for active service in the R.A.F.

No. 5 Service Training School, an important unit in the scheme, was officially opened in November at Brantford, Ontario, by Air Commodore G. E. Brookes, Commanding No. 1 Air Force Command.

Mr. C. G. Power, Minister for Air, stated in the Canadian House of Commons on 19th November that the Empire Air Training Plan was benefiting by the extensive peace-time flying experience of many civilians who were managers and instructors in flying clubs which were incorporated as elementary schools. He said that all the schools in the Plan would be in operation a full six months in advance of the original time.

The first of the Empire air training schools in Canada's maritime provinces was opened on 23rd December at Moncton, New Brunswick. At this school, Canadian, English, Scottish, Welsh, Australian and New Zealand pupils are learning to be bomber pilots.

On 27th December, on the arrival in Scotland of another contingent of airmen under the Empire air scheme, it was announced that they included pilots, observers, gunners and wireless mechanics from Canada and the first batch of Australian pilots to reach Britain under the scheme.

### AUSTRALIA

It was announced in November that, excluding permanent personnel, administrative and technical staffs, the strength of the Royal Australian Air Force had risen to over 35,500.

The first Australian to fall in action while serving with a purely Australian unit in the War, was Squadron Leader F. R. Heath, who was killed when his squadron gained the first of a series of victories against the Italian air force in the Western Desert. His family has been represented in every war since the Sikh campaign of 1845. His father served under Kitchener at Omdurman, in South Africa during the Boer War, and on the North-West Frontier in 1914-18.

### CANADA

A reorganization of the Royal Canadian Air Force Headquarters was announced in December. Air Commodore G. O. Johnson, formerly Air Member for Organization and Training, has become Deputy Chief of the Air Staff. Air Commodore Robert Leckie and Group Captain S. G. Tackaberry become Members of the Air Council for Training and Supply respectively. Activities formerly controlled by the Air Member for Engineering and Supply will now be divided between the Air Member for Supply (Group Captain Tackaberry) and Air Vice-Marshal E. W. Stedman, who has become Air Member for Aeronautical Engineering.

Air Vice-Marshal L. S. Breadner, the Canadian Chief of Air Staff, and Air Vice-Marshal E. W. Stedman arrived in England at the end of December, for consultation on Canada's war effort, and particularly the expansion of the Empire Air Training Scheme.

Air Chief Marshal Sir Hugh Dowding, late Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Fighter Command, arrived in Ottawa at the end of December for conferences with the Canadian Air Minister, Mr. Power, and the British Air Liaison Mission, before proceeding to Washington.



**NEWFOUNDLAND**

Many Newfoundlanders are at present training in Canada under the Empire Air Training Scheme. They include future pilots, air observers, and wireless operator air gunners. Though temporarily attached to the R.C.A.F. they are classified as R.A.F. men, and when they have completed their training, will come to England to fly in R.A.F. squadrons. The majority are wireless operator air gunners.

**SOUTHERN RHODESIA**

In an address to the Royal Empire Society on 19th November, Mr. S. M. Lanigan O'Keefe, the High Commissioner, said that Southern Rhodesia was rapidly establishing nine flying schools, and it would not be long before a steady stream of some thousands of highly-trained airmen would be arriving each year in this country, where already hundreds of young Rhodesians were undergoing training as ground staff.

**FOREIGN****GERMANY**

According to the Aeronautical Correspondent of *The Times*, the new German four-engined Focke-Wulf Kurier bomber has recently been operating against British shipping in the Atlantic.

This type has been developed from the somewhat slower Condor. It is reported to have a high speed and to be able to carry "an enormous bomb load over long distances," and is also equipped with a de-icing device enabling it to operate in any weather.

**ITALY**

A Swiss report, quoted in a recent number of *The Aeroplane*, states that the Italian air force is now using two new types—a dive-bomber and a torpedo-carrying seaplane. The Breda 201 bomber is compared with the Junkers Ju 87 B., and is said to have a maximum speed of 250 m.p.h., and to carry a bomb load of 2,200 lb. No particulars are available of the seaplane, which is called the Idrosilusante, but it is known to have been used in attacks on the British Navy in the Mediterranean. (27th December.)

**UNITED STATES**

**NEW BOMBERS.**—Size is a quality inevitably associated with trans-Atlantic productions; and reports of new American bombers, either ordered by Britain or for the United States Air Services, feature their size as an outstanding point.

One type of big American bomber is the Boeing B.17, sometimes called the "Flying Fortress." Actually, as big 4-motor aircraft go, it is not unusually large. Its general dimensions and range correspond to those of Britain's 20-ton, 4-engine flying-boat—the Short "Sunderland." Its wing span of 105 feet is 8 feet less than that of the "Sunderland." It is some 18 feet less than the span of the Armstrong-Whitworth "Ensign," Britain's biggest civil air liner, also a 4-motor aircraft.

As first produced some few years ago, the original "Flying Fortress" had four 1,000 h.p. Wright "Cyclone" motors, which gave it a maximum speed of about 250 m.p.h. The effective range claimed was around 3,000 miles—say from London to Tripoli and back—and the service ceiling just under six miles. Bomb load is a variable factor dependent, among other things, on the amount of fuel

carried. But it is safe to assume that the B.17 could carry 4 to 5 tons of bombs and ammunition on a round trip of 2,000 miles. A feature of the design, which gave the B.17 the name of "Flying Fortress," is the number of protective gun positions. Four of these were originally located in "blisters" on the outside of the fuselage, but later examples show gun turrets, similar to the British practice. Even so, the total gun power is not likely to approach that possessed by the latest versions of Britain's famous bombers, such as the turreted Wellington. An improved "Flying Fortress," produced just before the war, had a cleaned-up external design, and a special super-charging system for giving greater engine power at heights above 20,000 feet. The resulting performance figures were not made known, but it may be assumed that the maximum speed of 250 m.p.h. has been improved upon.

A new bomber now being built by America is in a different category and, so far as is known, really is the "world's largest." This is the Douglas B.19, a 60-ton monster with a wing span of 210 feet—three times that of the Handley-Page "Hampden." Four Wright "Duplex-Cyclone" motors, each of 1,700 h.p. are calculated to give this new Douglas bomber a speed of "over 200 m.p.h." The estimated range is 6,000 miles, roughly the distance from New York to Southampton and back. A "useful load" of 28 tons is quoted, including about 18 tons of bombs.

The landing gear is of the three-wheel "tricycle" type, and a feature of the design is the provision of heated and air conditioned cabins and sleeping quarters for the crew of ten. Sound-proofing, a practice usually associated only with modern civil air liner construction but important from the point of view of flying fatigue, has also been provided in the radio operator's and navigator's compartments.

According to Press reports, the new Martin B.26 bomber is now ready for tests. This is a medium twin-engined bomber, which is expected to prove very fast, and will be taken into service by the U.S. Army Air Corps.

## REVIEWS OF BOOKS

### GENERAL

**Elizabethan England.** Vol. VII., 1587-1588. By E. M. Tenison. (Private circulation.)\*

A XVIth Century Spanish Ambassador who had seen much service in the field as a cavalry officer under the famous Duke of Alba admonished his future Sovereign that "things present" can be elucidated by "warnings of the past," because "from the first creation of the world until now" the conduct of war has varied only in "the difference of weapons, engines, and instruments." The main principles and objects do not change, and in every era Monarchs should beware of imagining that money and weapons suffice to win wars. Wars are won or lost according to the natures of the men concerned: *armas y dineros buenos manos quieren*. This old proverb recurs to memory when studying the VIIth volume of Tenison's *Elizabethan England . . . in Relation to all Foreign Princes*, 1587-1588. Sharp as is the contrast between our present enemies and the courtly and ceremonious Spaniards of 1588, conspicuously different as are the persons, the weapons, the ships and the etiquette, the new volume abounds in matter extraordinarily appropriate to be read here and now. As in the previous Tenison volumes, the difference between this and all other English histories is that it unfolds simultaneously the affairs of England and Spain, that the naval and military elements are co-ordinated as never before and that the maps—mostly unique and hitherto unknown—and the other illustrations enable us to assimilate swiftly and with ease what must have taken long patience to discover and collect. Most graphically, from unpublished despatches of Sir Roger Williams, we are shown how the Capture of Sluys—then a principal seaport, was the prelude to the intended invasion of England; "Royal Majesty, believe not overmuch your peacemakers," wrote Sir Roger; and deplored that the Queen was more ready to hear the most ignorant who expected peace than the most experienced who realised that the war was approaching its crisis. In volumes V. and VI. we have followed the beginnings of that war; and now in 1587 Drake's surprise descent on Cadiz in April and the Duke of Parma's capture of Sluys in July are seen as parts of the same struggle. The gallant defence of Sluys was in vain, because neither the United Provinces nor Queen Elizabeth would send adequate reinforcements. Sir Roger, however, and Van Grunevelt would not surrender until Parma's heavy artillery had battered the ramparts to ruins and Parma was actually into the town. Even in that extremity, Sir Roger declined to capitulate unless promised for himself and his companions full honours of war. The magnificent and princely Parma assented: he could afford to be magnanimous.

Tenison shows us how Parma's victory appeared in the eyes of his uncle King Philip to forecast yet greater success in England. Also how such anticipations were frustrated, not by the "good luck" of England or by the storm but by the long

\* The Institution is indebted to Mr. J. F. Ruthven for the gift of each of these fine volumes as they have appeared, and the Journal for this and reviews of previous volumes.—EDITOR.

preparations both of the Navy and Army and the astute foresight of Lord Burghley. Never before have we been shown the military side of the 1588 administration. The Army Lists will astonish some of the descendants of noblemen whose gifts of troops of Horse to the Crown are now revealed. Our historian says in the Introduction, "The voluntary nature of the cavalry was a cause of admiration to England's friends, neighbours, and foes, at the time"; and that when we see the particulars "we will understand that the eminent writer who lately expressed his humiliation at the wretched quality of the Elizabethan troops, would have felt otherwise if he had ascertained the officers' names. To judge the Army without finding out of whom and what it was composed and to sum up the position without seeking the figures has so long been the custom that to deviate from it will be considered in England almost to require an apology." Among outstanding revelations are the Exchequer Tables, compiled by Captain B. M. Ward, late of the King's Dragoon Guards, and lent to Tenison, showing that however much the Queen might grumble at "charges," the expenditure on defence of the realm was a very large proportion of the national revenue.

The Queen's visit to Tilbury Camp is graphically rendered, and the modern sceptic who discusses her speech as "apochryphal" is gently but firmly answered, for actually the speech was taken down on the spot by the Chaplain to the General of the Horse—the Earl of Essex. That even King Philip's spies testified to the excellent quality of Essex and his Horsemen and to the "great authority and following" and patriotism of Leicester, and that neither side supposed the Peace Conference to be of any practical value, appears most vividly. Tenison has unearthed Burghley's peace terms; they are such as the Spanish Commissioners could not possibly have accepted and are phrased with a dry sarcastic humour as different as possible from the pacifist Burghley of the gigantic delusion called "standard history" upon which we have all been educated.

This volume, expected at the end of last year, was delayed by difficulties incident upon the War, and the preface dated 17th October, 1939, touches upon then recent events—especially the relations of Spain and England, quoting General Franco's words to an Englishman (p. xx.): "I do not believe," he said, "that there is any way in which our aims need clash with yours . . . It is to our honour and interest and to England's that we should be good friends." Tenison adds "and so we might be increasingly if British educational circles would cease repeating certain XIXth Century fallacies which first arose rather from ignorance than from malice; errors amended dispassionately in *Elizabethan England* . . . Former misapprehensions need no longer influence any judicial mind, since in one and the same History the case can at last be seen both for England and Spain—in fairness to each, and in flattery of neither."

Since this was written the new commercial pact between Britain and Spain, negotiated in December, 1940, is an event of major importance to which some of the old friends of Spain looked forward with confidence. Had Franco intended any quarrel with Britain he would never have chosen for his Ambassador so lifelong a friend of England as the Duke of Alba. As with previous volumes of the great History, the works and words of the Duke of Alba are drawn upon. His *discurso* to the Royal Academy of History of Spain at its Bicentenary in 1938 is singularly impressive. It is obvious that the writer of *Elizabethan England* was untroubled by the slightest apprehension that Spain to-day would be ruled from Italy or Germany. The speeches quoted of Franco and of Moscardo, linking past and present, are conspicuously different from what we get in our daily Press. A pseudonymous work by this same historian was long ago commended by a military critic—"To all

men, and particularly to soldiers." In this case I would now add "and to seamen." It is no secret that the author was encouraged in youth by some of our greatest Victorian men of action and has been reproached by civilian cynics for embodying "the Service point of view." But there is no one point of view. The outstanding feature is that all the personages are allowed to speak direct. As pronounced in 1935 by the Spanish Academy of History, the work reconstructs the course of events by co-ordinating the direct evidence. At the present moment it is especially gratifying as showing what we have behind us, and, by implication what Hitler has not! As when we had only half an island in 1588, and no oversea Empire, we held our own against the mightiest potentate in the Old World and the New, it is reasonable to hope we will not forfeit to-day the heritage saved then against enormous odds.

The sketch maps of the coast, drawn on the eve of invasion ("Reason would a scale but time permits not," 1st May, 1588), the distances marked roughly on the places; the instructions for land defences and administration; the annotations by Burghley on the captured Spanish Navy List; the victory celebrations, and the sudden death of the Earl of Leicester; the desire of Oxford University to have the General of the Horse, Essex, as Chancellor in his place—all stand out in memory after the volume is closed. Its moral—of foresight, preparedness, vigour and valour, is especially acceptable when we are confronted with invasion problems on a larger scale. Combining a marked precision with a most artistic manner of presentation this work must delight all except the foes of "learning and chivalry."

**Income Tax for H.M. Forces.** By Captain G. B. Burr. (Taxation Publishing Co., Ltd.) 1s.

This publication should prove of great value to Service readers in dealing with their Income Tax problems, and in many cases will probably be instrumental in assisting them to secure adjustments which will increase the net pay available to them.

It contains many practical examples together with useful hints and explanations of technical terms, and the general arrangement and index makes all the information readily accessible.

#### MILITARY

**The Army of the Future.**<sup>1</sup> By General de Gaulle. (Hutchinson & Co.) 3s. 6d.

If the gift of foresight is a part of genius, General de Gaulle may fairly claim a rich endowment. He published this book in France, in 1934, shortly after the usurpation of the supreme power in Germany by Hitler, and he foretold the inevitability of the German onslaught along the river Meuse. This attack, he predicted, would be launched by a mass of armoured, mechanized and motorized divisions to which the existing French Army would be unable to offer any effective resistance. The defence of France, he advocated, should be entrusted to a specialist and long-service Army comprising 100,000 picked soldiers and organized in six armoured divisions.

Unfortunately this proposal was unwelcome to the ruling political clique, and received little support from the French High Command. The French Army thus entered upon the Battle of France with an out-of-date equipment and an obsolete tactical doctrine.

<sup>1</sup> This book was published in France in 1934, and is now translated for the first time.



Equipment, however, can be modernized and tactical doctrines revised. General de Gaulle claims that the secret of victory lies in mechanization: thousands of armoured fighting vehicles intimately supported by hundreds of accurate dive-bombing aeroplanes. The correctness of this thesis was proved over and over again during the great battles in France and Flanders, May-June, 1940.

**Fieldcraft, Sniping and Intelligence.** By Major Nevill A. D. Armstrong, O.B.E., F.R.G.S. (Gale & Polden, Ltd.) 6s.

This book should prove of great help to Battalion Intelligence officers in training their sections. It contains sections on observation, scouting, sniping, care and use of the telescope, camouflage, sketching and map reading, amongst many others. Well executed diagrams and sketches help to make the subject matter clear.

#### REGIMENTAL HISTORY

**A History of the 4th Prince of Wales's Own Gurkha Rifles, 1857-1937.**

2 vols. Compiled by Ronald Macdonell, C.B.E., and Marcus Macaulay, with Illustrations by Lieutenant-Colonel C. G. Borrowman. (William Blackwood & Sons, Ltd.) £4 4s.

This excellent history traces the careers of the 1st and 2nd battalions of the 4th Prince of Wales's Own Gurkha Rifles, from their formation in 1857 and 1886, respectively, to 1937. Between them, these two battalions earned 25 battle honours, taking part in nine wars, including the second Afghan War, the Boxer Rebellion in China, and the Great War, besides many of the campaigns on the frontiers of India. The history is in two volumes with ample maps. The second volume, besides the history of the regiment after the Great War, has thirteen appendices, including an illustrated one on dress.

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